COLLINGIA BIOGLISH

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NUMBER 5

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John M. Aden: Doctrinal Design of An Essay on Criticism

Michael E. Adelstein: Duality of Theme in The Vicar of Wakefield

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COLLEGE ENGLISH

Volume 22

FEBRUARY 1961

Number 5

"What Thou Lovest Well Remains"

RUTH G. STRICKLAND

A Golden Anniversary is a time for glancing back at the path that is receding behind us. It is a time for looking intently at the road under our feet to see whether we are where we want to be, to find firm footing and avoid obstructions over which we might trip or ruts and pitfalls into which we might stumble. It is a time for looking ahead as far as our insight and foresight can take us along the broad highway of the future.

The National Council of Teachers of English was founded fifty years ago by teachers who were convinced that through working together the teaching of English might be strengthened. The majority of the Council's members during the early years were teachers in secondary schools and colleges. Gradually interest expanded to take in teachers in elementary schools. During the past two years our organization and other organizations with similar interests have made a thorough-going effort to see the English program as a whole, from kindergarten through the graduate school. The report of the Conference on Basic Issues in the Teaching of English has laid squarely before us some of our present problems and presented some challenging possibilities for the future.

The fifty years behind us have brought many changes in schools and in life outside the school. Each year sees more students of all levels of ability in our schools and an extended span of planned education for each of them. The significance of the English language, this language we teach, has expanded mightily during the last fifty years until it comes closer to being a world-wide language than has any language during man's recorded history. The role of language in the lives of the students we teach and the role of the English language in the life of the world needs to be looked at afresh in each generation and particularly in ours.

Of all the issues brought to the attention of teachers of English by the report of the Conference on Basic Issues, the one that has most effectively kindled imagination and effort is the need for an articulated program of English from kindergarten through college. Through the Anniversary Conference Tours members of your Executive Committee have visited throughout the United States and talked with many teachers. The enthusiasm and interest that is being generated in the cause of better teaching of English is good for everyone.

Concern for articulation in the program of English is not new. In his book on The Teaching of English in the Secondary School, written in 1917 (Houghton Mifflin Company), Charles Swain Thomas entitled one of his chapters, "Articulation of Elementary-School English with Secondary-School English." All of us, he said, have the same common aims in the teaching of English: to de-

Professor of Education at the University of Indiana, Dr. Strickland delivered this presidential address to the NCTE Golden Anniversary Convention in Chicago, November, 1960.

velop power in expression and power in interpretation. In this endeavor we have found it expedient to divide ourselves into groups labeled kindergarten teachers, elementary teachers, grammar grade (or junior high school) teachers, high school teachers and college and university teachers. Each group has set about doing the work that needed to be done in its field. Working in our respective fields we have at times been baffled and vexed to find our notions of what we should do disturbed and our progress hampered. Because we are human we have looked to discover who was responsible for the disturbing conditions and have tended to lay the blame on the teachers who preceded us. In our calmer moments, we recognize such fault-finding as not only futile but unjust. These ideas expressed by Thomas in 1917 might be credited to us in 1960. His motivation for putting his material into form was an invitation to offer to the students of Harvard Summer School a course in the teaching of English. Our motivation for considering an articulated program in the teaching of English is our recognition of the significance of the English language in the lives of our young people and in society.

The Conference on Basic Issues offers three reasons for the teaching of English: for its practical value, for its civilizing value, and for the love of it. We have always given attention to its practical value though our concept of some aspects of it has changed through the years. We have only partially recognized its civilizing value, and teaching so that students study the language for the love of it is something we must learn to do.

There are important values and some cautions that need to be considered in building an articulated program. Unique in our case is the fact that the program cannot start at ground level but must be erected on the floor of learned language which the child has built in his home and community. It is some of the early

stages of an articulated program to which I wish to direct your attention tonight.

Children come to school able to talk and to listen. We accept it as our task to make them literate. In our society we measure literacy by the written word, though, as a Hindu teacher reminds us, there is also "a literacy of the spoken word-thoughtfully spoken and thoughtfully listened to." In these days when mass media continually pour forth sound and the noise of life beats unceasingly on our ears, children need help with recognizing listening as a mental process-a process which requires effort and concentration but which, practiced with discrimination and thoughtfulness, results in satisfying interaction with other minds. Nor is emphasis on listening new in our time. Epictetus called attention to its importance when he told his followers, "Nature has given us one tongue but two ears, that we may hear from others twice as much as we speak." And Plutarch said, "Know how to listen and you will profit even from those who talk badly."

Traditionally, we have taken listening for granted. No one fifty years ago thought of teaching listening. The nearest a teacher came to it was an occasional admonition to children to "pay attention and listen" and those who failed to do so were penalized for their failure. Yet listening is too important to take for granted for it is through the ear that children learn their language and have their first experience with literature.

Speaking in the elementary school classroom of fifty years ago was legal only if it was done in answer to the teacher's question or at her request. To whisper to one's neighbor was a misdemeanor and to communicate through the writing of a note was a crime. Children were still expected to be seen, not heard. The teacher did all of the talking except for brief answers to questions. In most schools class discussion was unknown. Today we know that helping

children learn to use speech effectively and confidently is highly important since so much of the work of the world is done in face to face contacts and since an individual's personal, social, and vocational life is colored by his ability to use oral language.

The child who learns to speak well can learn to write well if at first the emphasis is placed on ideas, not on mechanics. No child writes better than he talks. The child who rarely exercises his mind or his tongue in composing and uttering a well-constructed complex or complex compound sentence will mutilate such a sentence in reading it orally, will comprehend poorly in reading it silently, and will be completely unable to put an equivalent sentence on paper. Oral language is the foundation on which the literacy of the written word is built.

If children learn the importance of meaning and communication at an early age, it is possible that they can learn the structural rules more easily. Any language has its system of signals by which the relationship of symbols is made known. In order to control the language, one must control the signals. It is quite possible that children can learn the structural linguists' signals of stress, intonation and juncture more readily than they learn parts of speech and the rules of traditional grammar.

Children need to learn that words are powerful things which can hurt or heal, construct or tear down, build friendships or destroy them, create problems or solve them as well as carry information and turn the wheels of human interaction. Monologue is insufficient in human interaction. If discussion is to be fruitful, a quarrel settled, we must not merely talk at one another or about one another, we must talk to and with one another. It is, as Harry Overstreet says (The Mind Goes Forth), a minimum program for our civilized living together. Children can learn to respect

language and take pride in using it precisely and well.

A child builds himself as he builds his language. His concepts of himself, of others, of life on the earth, of man's relationship with man, take shape as he learns his language. We recognize the truth of the statement that "A society is possible in the last analysis because the individuals in it carry around in their heads some sort of picture of that society" (Louis Wirth in Karl Mannheim's Ideology and Utopia). Children begin at an early age to conjure up that picture. Experience, both real and vicarious, provides the canvas and the colors. "Knowledge cannot be poured into a child's mind, like fluid from one vessel into another. . . . Development of mind is by growth and organization, not by external accretion." These are not the words of a modern educationist, so called. They are the words of a successful lawyer who in 1837 gave up a brilliant career in law and politics to become the secretary of the newly created State Board of Education of Massachusetts. Horace Mann recognized that children are growing organisms with drives, feelings and interests of their own which we do well to recognize and build upon.

Some among us who know what they want youth to be able to do when they enter college would have us start young children with the skills of manipulating letters and numbers, drill them thoroughly without regard to interest or understanding, make skills automatic, then move on to develop thinking, reasoning, discrimination and judgment. Life is not like that and children cannot be developed that way. What to the child makes sense and excites his interest is learned and retained; what does not is soon lost. The teaching of grammar is an excellent example. Most schools teach grammar every year from the fourth grade through high school yet the college teachers of English complain that it has not been learned. It is equally true

that the child who is drilled in the memorization and manipulation of numbers and processes but does so without understanding can be depended upon to take in high school no mathematics that is not required and to avoid it entirely in college. We ignore the child's feelings, interests and understanding at our peril. This does not mean that we teach only what the child wants to know. It means that we continuously open up new vistas and guide him as he moves forward. It means what Tennyson meant when he said in "Ulysses,"

All experience is an arch where thro' Gleams an untravell'd world, whose margin fades Forever and forever when I move.

Schools cannot be mills for processing into children skills and knowledge. They must be places in which children develop skills in order to use them for the adventure and excitement of further learning and for exploring their world. Every parent can testify that children are not motivated by long deferred or distant goals, A child needs satisfaction and fulfillment as he moves along; the fact that adults point out the goal in the mist on a distant horizon moves him not at all. He lives in today—he must do so because that is the only way he can learn. Richard Weaver in his book, Ideas Have Consequences, says, "It is our destiny to be faced originally with the world as our primary datum but not to end our course with only a wealth of sense impressions. Our cognition passes from a report of particular detail to a knowledge of universals. . . ." We can no more build children by deciding what adults would have them be and planning from the top down than we can build a house starting at the roof. The strength of the foundation determines in large measure the strength of the structure. That means that we must build not only skills but desires, interests, understanding, and above all values because

these are the motivating power in all human life. And these begin to develop at an early age.

Milton said what we mean in Paradise Regained, "The childhood shows the man as morning shows the day." Ruskin expressed it too when he said, "Education does not mean teaching people what they do not know. It means teaching them to behave as they do not behave. It is not teaching the youth the shapes of letters and the tricks of numbers, and then leaving them to turn their arithmetic to roguery, and their literature to lust. It means, on the contrary, training them into the perfect exercise and kingly continence of their bodies and souls. It is a painful, continual and difficult work to be done by kindness, by watching, by warning, by precept, and by praise,

but above all-by example."

Clifton Fadiman (The Instructor) has set forth an idea which makes good sense to students of child development. He says that the best place to teach philosophy is not in the university but in the elementary school to the child from 8 to 12. The child looks at the world with wonder: he wants to know how it was made, who made it, how he, himself, came to be and why, what makes people and animals differ from one another, why people behave as they do, how people think and feel, what it means to be good and truthful and brave. We can lead children to wonder about man and the universe and to understand and appreciate what great and wise people have thought, said and done as they studied man and his world.

Each passing epoch has its special quality and its value system with which it indoctrinates its children. In our time, it would seem to be our faults and the less admirable of our values that are imposed on the children waiting their turn on the world's stage. The boys and girls in our elementary schools today will be at the peak of their powers in the year 2000 and will live by the values

we teach them. What Richard Weaver has called the Great Stereopticon brands its imprint into children's thinking at an early age. The newspaper, radio, television and the motion picture are a manmade cosmos of the world of events. For the average participant it is a construct with a set of significances which he does not think of examining. He accepts them as his pious forbears of the thirteenth century accepted the cosmos as they knew it.

The various mass media which make up the Great Stereopticon present a version of life as controlled as that taught by the societies we condemn because of their control of the thinking of their people. This version of life is sadly lacking in moral inspiration and in ethical and aesthetic values. Behind every story, whether in the newspapers or on television, is conflict of some sort. Conflict is the essence of drama, to be sure. but the accentuation of differences and the disproportionate attention to misdeeds makes criminals appear heroic and small men larger than life. Today all this is done with a reckless use of words which seems to depress and destroy what is good and to elevate what is coarse, weak and vicious.

The only way to raise standards in any field is to develop an audience and participants who demand higher standards. We can help children become aware of their own growing sophistication as they contrast a poor story on the screen or in print with a good story. They can learn to investigate the characteristics of the stories they find satisfying. It is not difficult to combine critical study of mass media with the development of composition skills through encouraging students to write to television and motion picture producers their forthright evaluations of acceptable and non-acceptable productions.

The process of building values is a step-by-step process and the steps are small. The child is well on his way by the time he enters school. If he comes from a home where standards are high, the school can build on what he brings. If the home standards are low, the school must work to revise them. We cannot, in any case, develop skills and then move on to develop critical thinking, reason and values. By that time it is too late. We have seen all too much in our time of the semi-barbarian. He is literate, of course, but he has not learned to think critically or to relate his knowledge to moral ideas.

Many Americans today would regenerate our country by beginning at the base and dealing with education. Some would reverse the stand which Rousseau took; would drive us back to the mechanical and artificial rather than stand for the rights of the spon-

taneous and natural.

The basic impulses of man have been described as two in number, the possessive impulse and the creative impulse. The possessive impulse tends to concern itself with the acquisition of material things and with power over others, and is a source of conflict and disharmony among men. This impulse is responsible for the hidden poverty of our lives, outwardly rich but starved within. The creative impulse, which is concerned with making and doing, gives direction and meaning to our activities and transforms life into an art (Joseph Hunt, Architecture and the Spirit of Man). Akin to that impulse and probably a part of it is the desire to acquire knowledge and skill to build up oneself and to enlarge and refine one's method of thinking and operating. The more creative an individual becomes the more humane his attitude tends to be toward himself and toward society.

Paul Hazard (Books, Children and Men) has said that we in America confuse the development of the soul with material progress; we deplore the tendency toward uniformity and the disappearance of individual initiative and denounce the dangers of a life that has only standardized work for occupation and only sports and the popular mass media for relaxation. Yet, he says, "The elite of the country, that long-suffering elite which rebels against any diminution of the spirit, surrounds the coming generation with a solicitude unequaled anywhere as a treasury of hope." There is a dichotomy in our thinking regarding children and their education. We are not entirely clear as to our goals for children or how to attain them.

We do know that we want to make readers of children. A reader is a person who reads, not a person who can read. Therefore our teaching of reading must be such that children are hungry for books and happy in reading them. Reading must from the beginning be concerned with meaning. Learning to decipher words, while it is highly important, is only a portion of the process of learning to read. The controversy regarding the place of phonics in the reading program is at least as old as 1838 when Horace Mann wrote in his annual report, ". . . it would seem quite as incredible, that any person should compel children to go through the barren forms of reading, without ideas; as to make them perform the motions of eating without food." ". . . when put to learning the letters of the alphabet first, the child has no acquaintance with them, either by the eye, the ear, the tongue, or the mind; but if put to learning familiar words first, he already knows them by the ear, the tongue, and the mind, while his eye alone is unacquainted with them." And again, "An example of the purely mechanical part is exhibited in reading a foreign language, no word of which is understood; as in the case of Milton's daughters, who read the dead languages to their blind father; they, with eyes, seeing nothing but black marks upon white paper; he, without eyes, surveying material and spiritual worlds, at once charmed by their beauties, and instructed

by their wisdom" (On the Education of Free Men). We want our children to be charmed and instructed by their reading as they learn to survey their material

and spiritual world.

Hazard, a member of the French Academy, was impressed on his visits to America with our books and libraries for children. "What wonderful efforts have been made [for childhood] to safeguard it, to nourish its spirit, to provide the choicest foods for its curiosity! Explorers set forth from America to all the countries of the world to bring back new story material. Artists, designers, engravers, painters from all the countries of the world arrive in America invited to decorate the pages of children's books" (Books, Children and Men).

Children love books because by nature they desire to know and to experience. The stories in which they live help to form their philosophy of life. They need not only the stories from folklore and mythology, to which they will find allusions in adult literature, but also the literature of childhood—the stories of joy and sorrow, disappointment and fulfillment. Children need these stories to understand life and to enter into their

common humanity.

Some aspects of the work in reading and literature in the schools of fifty years ago may reside in the memories of those of us whose school experience spans the years of the Council's history. Contrasts are interesting to sketch. Books for children at the threshold of learning to read have gone full cycle-from content such as "I see a ball. It is a red ball." through stories of The Little Red Hen and The Gingerbread Boy to today's beautifully illustrated preprimers and primers whose content is of the "Oh! Oh! Look, look!" variety. Content in reading textbooks of fifty years ago for older children included stories of Androcles and the Lion, Bruce and the Spider, The Leak in the Dyke, and William Tell as well as Kingsley's Water Babies which

some of us learned to thoroughly dislike not because of the story content but because good readers had to mark time and "keep the place" while poor readers floundered through material far above their heads. Reading textbooks today contain a great variety of modern as well as traditional stories. In good schools children are guided in selecting books that are challenging and satisfying. They are helped individually to read them with increasing skill and deepening comprehension. Some of us feel that the present day content of materials for beginning reading is boring to bright children, particularly to bright boys who do not easily tolerate such uninteresting material, and that we need to look again, not so much at methods of teaching beginners as at the content we give them. The teaching of reading beyond the beginning stage, through which children are taught to adapt reading skills to varying content and purposes, to read for meaning and for personal enrichment marks a distinct advance over the work done fifty years ago if teachers follow the guidance of the experts in the field of reading.

Contrasts exist also in the field of literature. Poetry for young children fifty years ago consisted almost entirely of Mother Goose, and the poems of Robert Louis Stevenson with a sprinkling from James Whitcomb Riley, Eugene Field, Edward Lear and Lewis Carroll. Today there is a wealth of poetry written for young children by people who understand their interests—A. A. Milne, Rose Fyleman, Laura E. Richards, Rachel Field, and Eleanor Farjeon, to name only a few.

Farjeon, to name only a few.

Many of us remember the po

Many of us remember the poems we were required to learn as homework fifty years ago—Thanatopsis (which none of us understood), The Chambered Nautilus, To a Waterfowl, Tennyson's The Brook, Longfellow's The Children's Hour, and long passages from his Hiawatha. It is quite probable that many

a boy decided at that time that poetry was not for him. And the fashion changes. Few anthologies today include the poems that were our literary meat fifty years ago. But the poetry that is available to young people today is of such variety and worth that all of them can find poems which appeal enough so that they want to make them their own.

If we are concerned, as is C. P. Snow (The Two Cultures and the Scientific Revolution), with the emergence of two divergent cultures in our society, that of the scientist and that of the humanistand the inability of each to enter with understanding and sympathy into the thinking of the other or even to communicate—the place to work on the problem is not at the college level when specialization has become not only an interest but a necessity. The place to give thought to it is at the earlier levels of education where humanistic points of view as well as those of science can be made a part of the experience of all.

Perhaps the cultural inheritance into which we want all American children to enter is what Leon Howard (Literature and the American Tradition) has called the prevailing tradition in American literature—the indestructible belief in the power of the human spirit. The literature available to children starts them on the road to this faith—faith in the power and integrity of the human spirit to withstand the corrupting forces of society.

Children know what they like in books. They seem to have spontaneous dislike for what is insincere and false and they repudiate antagonisms and hatred. The books they like help them to build a sense of humanity because stories in their books come from all countries. Hazard says, "Smilingly, the pleasant books of childhood cross all frontiers; there is no duty to be paid on inspiration. . . Children's books keep alive a sense of nationality; but they also keep alive a sense of humanity. . . . They under-

stand the essential quality of their own race; but each of them is a messenger that goes beyond mountains and rivers, beyond the seas, to the very ends of the world in search of new friendships. Every country gives and every country receives—innumerable are the exchanges—and so it comes about that in our first impressionable years the universal republic of childhood is born" (Books, Children and Men).

The circumstances of living together in time and space have not made men peaceful. Man's reason cannot be relied on to change his conduct. His heart and emotions can be neglected only with peril. If enough individuals the world over can build resistance to evil, "affirming and spreading and communicating from one to another" the will to goodness, we may indeed achieve a new sense of world brotherhood.

We have passed the stage when we need to give children "books that ooze boredom-silly books or empty or pedantic books-books that paralyze the spontaneous forces of their souls." Children reject books that talk down to them-but once they have found books that they like, they take possession of them, whether the books were written for them or not. Children want authors who believe in the reality of external world-who are interested in things as they are. Their instinctive desire to drink deeply of life propels them in the direction of the values which give meaning to life-the moral and social values which time has proven to be our best safeguards.

No language is richer in its resources than is English. No literature has more to offer people of all ages. We want our young people so to respect their language that they hold high standards for their use of it. We want to develop in them such love of its literature that they will continue to live with it and expand their knowledge and appreciation of it throughout their lives.

In spite of the fact that we teach English to students from kindergarten through college we are not satisfied with the results of our teaching. Too many of our young people are content to use English badly. Too many of our college students take no work in English that is not required. Too few of our good students do major work in English and too few of these prepare to teach English. What we teach is important and the way we teach it is equally important. We cannot afford to alienate our students from the standards and the literature we wish them to love.

Three lines from Ezra Pound (The Pisan Cantos, LXXXI) may hold the key to the attainment of our goals. He says,

What thou lovest well remains, the rest is dross What thou lov'st well shall not be reft from thee What thou lov'st well is thy true

heritage.

We recognize that the task of learning English is a task of long duration, running through all the years of formal education and out into life beyond the school. The civilizing value of teaching English can be realized and we can hope that our young people will set higher and higher standards for their own growth and continue to study English "for the love of it."

CONFERENCE ON COLLEGE COMPOSITION AND COMMUNICATION

Thirtieth Annual Meeting
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Macbeth: The Tragedy of Evil

J. LYNDON SHANLEY

Nowhere can we see the essential humanity of Shakespeare more clearly than in *Macbeth*, as he shows that the darkest evil may well be human, and so, though horrible, understandable in terms of our own lives and therefore pitiable and terrible. Yet nowhere apparently are we so likely to miss the center of Shakespeare's view of the action; for *Macbeth*, while less complex than Shakespeare's other major tragedies, frequently raises the crucial question: Is Macbeth's fall really tragic?

Many who are deeply moved by the action of the play cannot satisfactorily explain their feelings. The doctrine of Tout comprendre, c'est tout pardonner leads them to think (most of the time) that there is no guilt, that there should be no punishment. When faced with unpardonable evil and inescapable punishment for the guilty, and when moved at the same time to pity and fear by the suffering of the evil-doer, they are confused. Since they confound the understanding of an act with the excusing of it, they are prevented from understanding acts (and their reactions to them) for which excuse is impossible. Some, of course, find an excuse for Macbeth in the witches. But those who do not see him as the victim of agents of destiny appear to wonder if they have not been tricked into sympathy by Shakespeare's art. How, they ask, in view of Macbeth's monstrous career and sorry end, so different from those of Hamlet, Lear, or

Othello, how can his fortunes win our pity and arouse our fear?

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Macbeth is defeated as is no other of Shakespeare's great tragic figures. No pity and reverent awe attend his death. Dying off-stage, he is, as it were, shuffled off, in keeping with his dreadful state and the desire of all in his world to be rid of him. The sight of his "cursed head" is the signal for glad hailing of Malcolm as king; all thought of him is dismissed with "this dead butcher and his fiend-like queen." The phrase is dramatically fitting, but it does not express the whole truth that Shakespeare shows us of Macbeth's story. Seldom do we feel so strongly both the justice of the judgment and the retribution and at the same time pity for him on whom they fall; for behind this last scene lies the revelation of Macbeth's almost total destruction.

Hamlet, Lear, and Othello lose much that is wonderful in human life; their fortunes are sad and terrible. So near, their stories seem to say, is man's enjoyment of the world's best gifts-and vet so far, because his own errors and weakness leave him unable to control his world. To lose Hamlet's delight in man and his powers, and the glory of life; to have Cordelia's love and tender care snatched away, after such suffering as Lear's; or to have thrown away the jewel of one's life as did Othello-this is painful. But their fortunes might have been worse. At one time they were: when the losers thought that what they had served and believed in were mere shows that made a mockery of their noblest love; when life and all their

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efforts seemed to have been utterly with-

out meaning.

But before the end they learned that their love had value and that life had meaning. On this knowledge depends the twofold effect of the heroes' deaths: death at once seals, without hope of restitution, the loss of the world and its gifts, but at the same time it brings relief from the pain of loss. Furthermore, this knowledge restores the courage and nobility of soul that raise them far above their enemies and the ruins of their world. Without this knowledge, Hamlet and Lear and Othello were far less than themselves, and life but a fevered madness. With it, there is tragedy but not defeat, for the value of what is best in them is confirmed beyond question.

But in the end of Macbeth we have something fundamentally different. Macbeth's spirit, as well as his world, is all but destroyed; no great recovery is possible for him. He does not, for he cannot, see that what he sought and valued most was good and worthy of his efforts. He is aware that he has missed much; shortly before Lady Macbeth dies, he broods over the "honour, love, obedience, troops of friends" he has lost and cannot hope to regain. But this knowledge wins no ease for his heart. It does not raise him above the conditions that have ruined him. Macbeth, it is true, is no longer tortured as he once was, but freedom from torture has led only to the peace of despair in which he looks at life and denounces it as "a tale told by an idiot."

Bitter as life was for Hamlet, Lear, and Othello, it was not empty. But all Macbeth's efforts, all his hopes and dreams were in vain, because of the way he went; and when he discovers that they were, he concludes that nothing can be realized in life. Hence his terrible indictment of life—terrible because it reveals him to be all but hopelessly lost in the world of Shakespearean tragedy, as he desperately and ironically blasphemes against a basic tenet of that

world, to the truth of which his own state bears overwhelming evidence: that man's life signifies everything.

It is the despair and irony in this blasphemy that makes Macbeth's lot so awful and pitiful. We see the paralyzing, the almost complete destruction of a human spirit. The threat of hostile action galvanizes Macbeth into action to protect himself, but the action is little more than an instinctive move toward self-preservation and the last gesture of despair. "At least," he cries, "we'll die with harness on our back." There is no sense of effective power and will to give life meaning, such as there is in Hopkins' lines:

Not, I'll not, carrion comfort, Despair, not feast on thee;

Not untwist-slack they may be-these last strands of man

In me or, most weary, cry l can no more. I can;

Can something, hope, wish day come, not choose not to be.

Here the speaker knows despair for what it is, and knows that something else is both possible and worth any effort. But not so Macbeth; he can see only the circumstances from which his despair arises; he can imagine no condition of life other than that he is in.

He has not even the bitter satisfaction of rebelling and saying, "As flies to wanton boys, are we to the gods." Only sheer animal courage remains to flash out and remind us of a Macbeth once courageous in an honorable cause. This reminder is pitiful, for Macbeth has not even the slim hope of a trapped animal which, if it fights loose, has something to escape to. All Macbeth did resulted in nothing; whatever he does now will result in nothing but the anguish of meaningless action. It is hard enough to realize that one has been on the wrong track for part of life; to be convinced that there is no right track to get on because there is no place for any track to gothis is to be lost with no hope at all.

At the very end we see some saving touches of humanity in Macbeth: he has not lost all human virtue; he would have no more of Macduff's blood on his soul; and even with the collapse of his last security, his bravery does not falter. These touches show him a man still, and not a fiend, but they by no means reestablish him in his former self. There is no greatness in death for him. Rather than the human spirit's capacity for greatness in adversity, we see its possible ruin in evil. Because we never see Macbeth enjoying the possession of the great prize he sought, and because from the beginning of his temptation we have no hope that he will be able to enjoy it, his loss of the world's gifts is not so poignant as that of Hamlet, Lear, or Othello. But to a degree that none of them does, Macbeth loses himself, and this is most tragic of all.

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It may be objected, however, that Macbeth alone of Shakespeare's great tragic figures is fully aware of the evil of the act by which he sets in motion the train of events leading to his ruin. His culpability seriously weakens the sympathy of many. In the face of this difficulty, some interpreters justify sympathy for Macheth by seeing him as the victim of the witches, the agents of destiny. This point of view, however, seems to cut through the complex knot of human life as Shakespeare saw it, instead of following the various strands which make it up. We cannot dodge Macbeth's responsibility and guilt-he never does.

His ruin is caused by the fact that he sins: he wilfully commits an act which he knows to be wrong. This ruin and sin are seen to be tragic, as Shakespeare, like Dante, reveals the pity and fear in a man's succumbing to grievous temptation, and in the effects of sin on his subsequent thoughts and deeds. Macbeth's guilt and the circumstances upon

which it depends do not decrease our pity and fear; they produce it; for Shakespeare presents Macbeth as one who had hardly any chance to escape guilt.

The concatenation of circumstances which make Macbeth's temptation is such as to seem a trap. At the very moment when he is returning victorious from a battle in which he has played a chief part in saving his country from disaster, there comes to him a suggestion -touching old dreams and desires-that he may be king. Shakespeare uses the witches to convey the danger of the suggestion. The witches and their prophecies are poetic symbols of the bafflingly indeterminate character of the events that surround men. The witches force nothing; they advise nothing; they simply present facts. But they confound fair and foul; just so, events may be good or ill. The witches will not stay to explain their greetings any more than events will interpret themselves. The witches' prophecies and the events that forever surround men are dangerous because they may appear simple and are not, because they may be so alluring as to stultify prudence, and because their true significance may be very hard to come at. Depending on conditions, they may be harmless, or they may be delusive, insidious, and all but impossible to read correctly.

Macbeth is in no condition to read them aright. He had restrained his desire for greatness in the past since he would not do the wrong which was needed to win greatness. The hunger of his ambitious mind had not died, however; it had only been denied satisfaction. Now, when the sense of his own power and his taste of it are high indeed, the old hunger is more than reawakened; it is nourished with hope, as immediate events seem to establish the soundness of the suggestion. Enough hope to lead him to ponder the suggestion seriously, and then, in spite of an attempt to put it out

of his mind since he recognizes the evil of his thoughts, to retail the wonderful news of possible greatness to his wife.

There follow immediately two events which press the matter on most hastily. The king proclaims his eldest son as his heir, and in the next breath announces his visit to Macbeth's castle. Thus, while desire and hope are fresh, Macbeth sees put before him, first, an obstacle which time will only make greater, and then an opportunity for him to prevent time from working against him. "If it were done when 'tis done, then 'twere well it were done quickly." In fact, it must be done quickly if it is to be done at all.

Desire, apparent promise of fulfillment, need for speedy action, and immediate opportunity fall together so rapidly as to create an all but inescapable force.

Yet Macbeth would have resisted temptation had he been left to himself. Great though his hunger for power and glory, especially when whetted by such circumstances, it would not have completely overcome his fears and scruples. Even if he were to jump the life to come, he knew that if he could and would kill Duncan, another might well do the same for him. On a higher plane, the double loyalty he owed to the king held him back. Finally, a point that reveals the virtue that was in him, he felt the goodness of Duncan so strongly that killing him seemed too terrible a thing to do. Worldly prudence, loyalty, reverence for what is good-these turned Macbeth back. Lady Macbeth's fears were well founded; his nature was not such as to let him "catch the nearest way."

But that nature could, as she felt, be worked. It was good, but not firm in its goodness. Macbeth is a moderately good man, no better, but also no worse, than the next one. The point is (and it is a grim one) that the virtue of the ordinarily good man is not enough to keep him from disaster under all possible cir-

cumstances—especially when some of them are such as may be for good or evil.

This was the nature of Lady Macbeth's influence on Macbeth. She could sway him because she understood him and loved him, and because he loved her and depended on her love and good thoughts of him. She could and would have urged him to noble deeds had occasion arisen. To prevent her from urging him on to evil ones, he needed more than the ordinary firmness to act as he saw right. But to cut clear of such a source of strength and comfort is difficult; too difficult for Macbeth. It is the old story of the perversion of the potentially good, and of the problem of getting only the good from the baffling mixture of good and evil in all things.

Just after Macbeth has decided to give up his murderous plot, but before intention can harden to resolve, Lady Macbeth adds the force of her appeals to that of Macbeth's desires and the press of circumstance. She sees his chance to win the prize of life; she knows he wants it, as she does not know in their full strength his reasons for renouncing it. She beats down, at least long enough for her immediate purpose, the fears and scruples which would otherwise have kept him from the crown, and murder and ruin. She does not answer Macbeth's scruples; her attack is personal. Whether she knows or simply feels his need of her admiration and support, she strikes at the right point. The spur of ambition did not drive Macbeth too hard toward his great opportunity, but her goading taunts he could not withstand, though they drove him on to horrors.

All this does not excuse Macbeth; no excuse is possible for one who, with full knowledge of the nature of the act, murders a good man to whom he owes hospitality, loyalty, and gratitude. Shakespeare makes us realize, however, how dangerous the battle, how practically irresistible may be the forces ar-

rayed against a man. Some men are saved from evil because they marry a Cordelia or a Viola; others because opportunity never favors their desires; and still others because the stakes do not justify the risk of being caught in evil doing. For Macbeth, the stakes are the highest, the opportunity golden, and the encouragement to evil from a wife whom he loves and needs.

Macbeth is terrified by the warnings of his conscience, but he cannot surrender. That he acts with full knowledge of the evil only increases the pity and fear aroused by his deed. For this knowledge causes much of his suffering; it makes his condition far worse than it would have been had he acted with less than complete knowledge; and, finally, it emphazises the power of the trickery, the lure, and the urging to which he was subjected. We pity his suffering even as he does evil because we understand why he could not hold on to the chance which he ought to have taken to save himself; and we are moved to fear when we see his suffering and understand how slight may be the chance to escape it.

TIT

Once that chance is lost greater suffering and evil follow inescapably. The bloody career on which Macbeth now embarks can no more be excused than could his first crime, but it increases rather than detracts from our pity and fear. The trap of temptation having been sprung, there is no escape for Macbeth, and his struggles to escape the consequences of his sin serve only to ensnare him more deeply. As we witness that struggle, our pity and fear increase because we feel how incompetent he is to do anything but struggle as he does.

Evil brings its own suffering with it, but Macbeth cannot learn from it. The unknown fifteenth-century author of The Book of the Poor in Spirit wrote of evil and suffering: "One's own proper suffering comes from one's own sins and

he suffers quite rightly who lives in sins, and each sin fosters a special spiritual suffering. . . . This kind of suffering is similar to the suffering in hell, for the more one suffers there the worse one becomes. This happens to sinners; the more they suffer through sin the more wicked they become and they fall more and more into sufferings in their effort to escape." Just so did Shakespeare conceive of Macbeth's state.

Macbeth has no enemy he can see, such as Iago or one of Lear's savage daughters; he is within himself. In first overriding the warnings of his conscience, he brings on the blindness which makes it impossible for him to perceive his own state and things outside him as they really are, and which therefore sends him in pursuit of a wholly illusory safety. When he puts away all thought of going back on his first evil deed, he deals the last blow to his conscience which once urged him to the right, and he blinds himself entirely.

No sooner does he gain what he wanted than he is beset by fears worse than those he overrode in murdering Duncan. But having overridden the proper fears, he cannot deal rightly with the new ones. His horror of murder is lost in the fear of discovery and revenge, and the fear of losing what he has sacrificed so much to gain. Briefly at least he wishes the murder undone and Duncan waking to the knocking at the gate. But just as earlier he thought, but failed, to put the witches' prophecies and his evil thoughts out of mind, so now his better thoughts die. By the time he appears in answer to the knocking at the gate, he is firmly set on a course to make good the murder of Duncan and to keep himself safe.

All is terrible irony from this point on. With a new decisiveness Macbeth kills the grooms in Duncan's chamber; alive, they were potential witnesses; dead, they can serve as plausible criminals. Then he plays brilliantly the part of a grief-stricken host and loyal subject:

Had I but died an hour before this chance,

I had liv'd a blessed time; for from this instant

There's nothing serious in mortality; All is but toys; renown and grace is dead;

The wine of life is drawn, and the mere lees

Is left this vault to brag of.

Irony could not be sharper. At the very moment when he seems to himself to be complete master of the situation, Macbeth, all unknowingly, utters the bitter truth about his state. He is still to be troubled by thoughts of evil, but the drive of his desire for peace from fear is greater; and to win security he is hurrying on the way in which he thinks it lies, but it is the way to the utter, empty loneliness he describes for us here.

Macbeth finds that the death of the grooms was not enough; Banquo and Fleance must go if he is to be free from torment. Through Macbeth's conversation first with Banquo about his journey, then with the murderers, and finally with Lady Macbeth, we comprehend to its full extent the disastrous change in him; he now contemplates murder with hope rather than horror. He still sees it as something to be hidden: "Come, seeling night, scarf up the tender eye of pitiful day." But he is willing to do more evil since he believes it will insure his safety: "Things bad begun make good themselves by ill." With the appearance of Banquo's ghost comes the last flicker of conscience, but also an increasing terror of discovery and revenge which drives Macbeth further than ever: "For mine own good all causes shall give way."

The only thing he can gain in his blinded state is the very worst for him. He now seeks out the witches to get that reassurance in his course which he cannot find in himself. Although they will not stay for all his questions, he unhesitatingly accepts their equivocations; since they do reassure him, his doubts of them are gone. With their answers, and having lost "the initiate fear that wants hard use" and being no longer "young in deed," Macbeth enjoys the sense of security of any gangster or tyrant who has the unshrinking will to crush any possible opponents, and who thinks he has power to do so with impunity. All that he has gained, however, is the freedom to commit "every sin that has a name to it."

His delusion is complete; his ruin inevitable. Not until he experiences the bitter fruition of his earthly crown does he discover what has happened to him. Even then, however, he sees only in part; the blindness he suffered when he succumbed to temptation was never to be lightened; and hence the final irony of

Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, Signifying nothing.

In The Scarlet Letter when Hester Prynne seeks mercy for Dimmesdale from Roger Chillingworth, the old physician replies: "It is not granted me to pardon. I have no such power as thou tellest me of. My old faith, long forgotten, comes back to me, and explains all that we do, and all we suffer. By thy first step awry thou didst plant the germ of evil; but since that moment, it has all been a dark necessity." So we feel, in part, about Macbeth, since we see him, not as a victim of destiny, but as one responsible for the misery and deaths of others as well as for his own suffering. But in spite of his responsibility we cannot withhold our sympathy from him.

The action of *Macbeth* evokes a somber "there but for the grace of God." We understand but we do not therefore pardon all. Rather we acknowledge the evil and the guilt and so acquiesce in the

inevitable retribution, but at the same time we are deeply moved by Macbeth's suffering and ruin because we are acutely aware of the dangerous forces before which he falls, and because we recognize their power over one like ourselves—a moderately good man who succumbs to temptation and who, having succumbed, is led to more evil to make good the first misstep, until there is no chance of with-

drawal or escape. As we watch him, we know that he should not have fallen; he might have resisted; but Shakespeare's vision here is of a world in which men can hardly do better amid the forces of circumstance; and in which, if men do no better, they must suffer, and lose not only the world but themselves as well. Of such suffering and loss is tragedy made.

The Doctrinal Design of An Essay On Criticism

JOHN M. ADEN

The reader first approaching Pope's Essay on Criticism is often disconcerted by what appears a bewildering diversity of doctrinal proposition with no apparent unity or ready principle of integration. He is confused by Pope's rapid invocation of a series of seemingly competitive, if not actually contradictory, tenets, each in its turn appearing to jostle its predecessor out of postion, and leaving the onlooker with the feeling that this new philosophy calls all in doubt. Here he is invited to attend Nature, there Art; now Wit and now Judgment; on this hand the Ancients, on that the Rules. It takes a practiced eye to see the harmony of all this, which Pope took so much for granted that he let his couplets sing along as he called together the various stones for his edifice of poetic theory. Yet the Essay, mighty maze that it is to the chance reader, is not without a plan, at once brilliant, unified, and simple.

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Pope is concerned in the Essay with what art is and with how it is to be attained (by the poet) and appreciated (by the critic). His whole doctrine resolves itself ultimately to the principle of Nature. It is here that art has its beginning and its end:

First follow Nature, and your judgment frame

By her just standard, which is still the same:

Unerring NATURE, still divinely bright, One clear, unchanged, and universal light,

Life, force, and beauty, must to all impart,

At once the source, and end, and test of

"Art from that fund each just supply provides" (68-74). For this imitation of Nature which he urges upon poet and critic alike, Pope recognizes two distinct and yet interrelated media, which we may distinguish as internal and external. The internal faculty is twofold, consisting of the wit and judgment, both of which, in turn, are derived from that

¹Quotations from The Best of Pope, ed. George Sherburn (New York, 1940).

very Nature which they negotiate in behalf of art:

True Wit is Nature to advantage dressed,

What oft was thought, but ne'er so well expressed. (297-98)

Most have the seeds of judgment in their mind:

Nature affords at least a glimm'ring light. (20-21)

Wit, in respect to this central doctrine (regardless of the various meanings it takes on in other contexts of the poem), signifies the creative faculty, the imagination. It is the prime mover in the world of poetry. In the quotation above, we need not be troubled by Johnson's objection (Life of Cowley) that Pope reduces wit "from strength of thought to happiness of language," for it seems likely that Pope's "to advantage dressed" refers, not to something so narrow as expression, but to the principle of heightening, or idealization; i.e., wit does not merely copy Nature, but imitates itidealizes it in accordance with the inner creative principle itself and in accordance with the classical assumption that all art is an act of perfecting simple Nature. "What oft was thought, but ne'er so well expressed" does not contradict this, but augments it in another direction: wit is not "originality" as we think of it today (or as Pope supposed the metaphysicals to think of it), acting to produce the unique, the hitherto unimagined, the peculiar, the idiosyncratic, the eccentric, or anything of the sort; it is rather an action of creativity within the acknowledged experience of all intelligent, educated, sensitive men, producing the true, the believable, the probable-in other words, "What oft was thought." But of course wit does not merely repeat the same probable formulation over and over; its "originality" lies in its new apprehension of the true and the probable, its new way of conceiving that Nature which all art contemplates and reflects, and hence its new way of expressing itself—what, in other words, "was ne'er so well expressed." Pope would have known that express in Latin means basically "to press out, force out, or squeeze forth," and for him, in this place, it has as much the force of eliciting as of wording.

The wit, or imagination, is, as I have said, the central agent in the translation that make art of Nature: it is the conceiving power which makes the old (the raw materials of Nature) new again, the conjuring power which forces Nature's secrets out into art. But, by virtue of the very fact that wit is a creative agent -a modifying function-it is subject to the dangers that have always been associated with the fancy. Unaided, wit may misrepresent Nature, may even distort Nature: may apprehend her extravagantly, inadequately, or falsely. For this reason, it requires the cooperation of a regulative or corrective faculty, the judgment:

For wit and judgment often are at strife, Though meant each other's aid, like man and wife. (82-83)

The judgment (Reason in the critical formulation) is the contemplative agent, the faculty which looks upon Nature (its mother too) in the clear, sober light of unexcited observation,2 untroubled by any urge to modify what it sees, but activated by a quite opposite motive, that of registering Nature justly or rightly-as she is. Thus it can correct any erroneous impressions reached by the wit, any over-enthusiastic or any insipid representation of her. Between the twothe active, aspiring, forming wit and the passive, conservative, observing judgment-Nature can be brought to yield herself in art. There is nothing mechanical or patent about the doctrine: it describes a powerful and important tension which Pope recognized in the making of poetry.

²Cf. Dryden, ⁴. . . observation is an effect of judgment." Preface to An Evening's Love, in Essays of John Dryden, ed. W. P. Ker (Oxford, 1926), I, 138.

An excellent illumination of the relationship of these two faculties, of the nature of each, and of the dynamic character of their play and interplay, can be had from the analysis and distinctions drawn in the *Essay on Man* between Self-love (mother of the Passions) and Reason. If where we read *Self-love* we substitute wit, and where we read *Reason* we substitute judgment, we can feel the force and significance of the analogy.

Two Principles in human nature [read Art] reign;

Self-love, to urge, and Reason, to restrain;

Nor this a good, nor that a bad we call, Each works its end, to move or govern all:

And to their proper operation still, Ascribe all Good; to their improper, Ill. Self-love, the spring of motion, acts the soul;

Reason's comparing balance rules the whole.

Man, but for that, no action could attend,

And but for this, were active to no end

Most strength the moving principle requires;

Active its task, it prompts, impels, inspires.

Sedate and quiet the comparing lies, Form'd but to check, delib'rate, and advise.

Self-love still stronger, as its objects nigh;

Reason's at distance, and in prospect lie: That sees immediate good by present sense:

Reason, the future and the consequence. (II, 53-74)

On life's vast ocean diversely we sail, Reason the card, but Passion is the gale (II, 107-08)

Yes, Nature's road must ever be prefer'd;

Reason is here no guide, but still a guard:

Tis hers to rectify, not overthrow,

And treat this passion more as friend than foe. (II, 161-64)

In a comparable animated and indispensable relationship, wit and judgment constitute the prime instruments of poetic. Wit, "the spring of motion," is the heart of the process; without it, "no action could attend." At the same time, without the judgment, it "were active to no end." Judgment does not dominate the poetics of Pope: "Nature's road must ever be prefer'd; / [Judgment] is there no guide, but still a guard."

But art may be achieved by the use of other instruments in addition to these, by what we have called external agencies, the ancients and the rules. These are no substitutes for wit and judgment, but auxiliary forces. And they too have a filial relationship with the Nature which they help to actualize in art:

Those Rules of old discovered, not devised,

Are Nature still, but Nature methodised. (88-89)

Just precepts thus from great examples given.

She drew from them what they derived from Heaven. (98-99)

Learn hence for ancient rules a just esteem;

To copy nature is to copy them. (139-140)

The quotations are from the Twickenham edition of An Essay on Man, ed. Maynard Mack, (London, 1950). Cf. to the couplet about wit and judgment (Essay on Criticism, I, 82-83) the following from the Essay on Man: "Passions, like elements, though born to fight, / Yet, mixed and softened, in His [God's] work unite" (II, 111-12). To the nature methodised couplet in particular and the Nature doctrine generally, cf. the following: "Twas then, the studious head or gen'rous mind, / Follow'r of God or friend to humankind, / Poet or Patriot, rose but to restore / The Faith and Moral, Nature gave before; / Re-lumed her ancient light, not kindled new; / If not God's image, yet His shadow drew" (Essay on Man, III, 283-88).

When first young Maro in his boundless mind

A work t'outlast immortal Rome designed,

Perhaps he seemed above the critic's law,

And but from Nature's fountains scorned to draw:

But when t'examine every part he came, Nature and Homer were, he found, the same. (130-35)

Ancients and the rules are valuable to Pope, and to the best of his generation, not out of any superficial motives such as were once charged to them, but because the ancients and the rules are the progeny of Nature, because they are illustrations of the realization of Nature in art, and because they offer a kind of shorthand of Nature, or a formulation of those ways of reaching Nature that have been proved in art. They have no value in competition with Nature, but only as they reflect or point to her. They are, we may say, examples of Nature caught in art, or of Nature distilled in precept. They may, therefore, be consulted along with, or in addition to, the wit and judgment which initiate and first regulate the quest of art. They, like everything else in Pope's formulation of the artistic process, are valuable only insofar as they lead art to and from Nature.

All of this may be presented in a diagram, which, if we will not confuse it with Pope's statement, will help us to

grasp more readily his meaning and his concept.

Nature is placed at the top of the diagram as the ultimate consideration and also as indicating the transcendent, almost divine position which it holds in Pope's thought. Art is placed at the bottom as appropriate to its position as the crucial issue of Nature for the poet-the outcome, and as indicating its correspondence on the microcosmic level to Nature on the macrocosmic level. The Ancients may be placed at the left of the external circle in recognition of their precedence over the Rules in point of time; the Rules at the right as deriving partly from the Ancients as well as from the Nature which is the ultimate source of both. Wit and Judgment belong in the center as the internal faculties and as a sign of their central position in the art of poetry; wit above as the more crucial (and aspiring) faculty, judgment below as the secondary (and more downward looking), but no less necessary function. The shortest line between the two points of Art and Nature is that of the internal faculties. But to Pope Art imitates Nature more perfectly the more aids it has, hence the circuit embracing Rules and Ancients, either severally or together in turn.

Sometimes, it is true, the whole process can be short circuited, and Nature reached in a leap of genius, "Which without passing through the judgment, gains / The heart, and all its end at once attains" (154-55). This is the "grace beyond the reach of art," and Pope acknowledges it as willingly as the next artist; but it is, we must remember, a grace, a gift of heaven, as it were, and thus outside the normal processes. It is the miracle in Pope's testament. As a grace, furthermore, it might, like the grace, or light, popularly claimed by religious fanatics, prove only supposititious after all. At any rate, Pope makes no more of it than the allowance due the

obvious fact of genius; he does not constitute it part of his essential poetics.4

Returning to that basic formulation, we see that it reveals a highly integrated concept, with all elements deriving from Nature and pointing back to her, in an interlocking and reciprocating system. Wit springs from Nature (Nature to advantage dressed) and reaches towards Nature; judgment is an endowment of Nature (Nature affords its light) and works to guard her representation; both wit and judgment are the first instruments of art. The rules are Nature methodized and they provide the code by which she may be studied and approached. Nature and Homer (ancients)

are the same, and the ancients reveal by example the avenue to Nature. Both ancients and rules point the way, by practice and precept, to the goal of art. Wit, the child of Nature, is kindled by the ancients and (partly via the judgment) tempered by the rules, both which factors are in their turn reflections of wit triumphant. The judgment, implanted by Nature, is trained by the study, not only of Nature herself, but of her manifestations in the ancients and the rules, which, in their turn, drew virtue from the judgment. And all of them work in behalf of art. The only thing wanting in the diagram is movement; if it could pulse we would have a fairly good conceptualization of Pope's theory of art.

This at any rate is the heart of the Essay as doctrine, and it is, appropriately enough, expressed mostly in the strategically important Part I. Parts II and III, insofar as the doctrine is concerned, may be thought of as illustrating the doctrine by example from the external agencies, the rules (mainly in III) and the ancients (mainly in III).

"Pope warns against a blind faith in the genius that bypasses judgment and rules: "Moderns, beware!" (v. 163 ff.). See my article, referred to above. For grace as an aesthetic principle, see S. H. Monk, "'A grace beyond the reach of art." JHI, V (1944), 131-50.

*Cf. Dryden: "the fancy, memory, and judgment, are then extended (like so many limbs) upon the rack; all of them reaching with their utmost stress at Nature....." (Dedication of the Rival Ladies, Ker, I, 3.)

Duality of Theme in The Vicar of Wakefield

MICHAEL E. ADELSTEIN

The overwhelming and continuous popularity of The Vicar of Wakefield has caused critics in recent years to reason that such success must be attributed to more unity and coherence in the novel than had formerly been recognized. Casting traditional evaluations aside, the latest appraisers of Goldsmith's novel have found harmony, contrapuntal balance, consistency, unity, careful planning, and elaborate pattern. The comments about The Vicar have run full cycle since Macaulay's frequently quoted statement that the plot was "one of the worst that ever were constructed."

My contention is that truth in this instance is to be found somewhere between the polar extremes. I should like

"I refer here primarily to Curtis Dahl, "Patterns in Disguise in "The Vicar of Wakefield," ELH, XXV (1958), 90-104. The seminal study of the novel's unified structure was Frederick W. Hilles' introduction to the Everyman's Library American Edition (New York, 1951). All page references are to Hilles' edition.

Thomas Babington Macaulay, Miscellanies (Boston, 1900), III, 48.

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to suggest that Goldsmith did have the general outlines of his plot in mind but that he switched from the theme of prudence to that of fortitude. In this process, the central character was transformed from an innocent simpleton to a courageous, resolute hero. Much of the confusion about the novel has resulted from the failure to realize that Dr. Primrose, Part I, is not the same individual as Dr. Primrose, Part II.

I

Goldsmith concludes the first chapter of his novel with the summary statement that all the members of the Primrose family "had but one character-that of being equally generous, credulous, simple, and inoffensive" (p. 5). Such a description aptly applies to the narrator, the Vicar, who promptly in the following pages loses his fortune by carelessly entrusting it to a merchant, alienates Mr. Wilmot by indiscreetly advocating monogamy to the thrice-married gentleman and, consequently, brings about the dissolution of the George-Arabella marriage. All the ensuing misfortunes of the Primroses excepting the burning of their house result from the Vicar's blindness to the guile and unscruplousness of others, especially Squire Thornhill. The very first words about this character ("scarce a farmer's daughter within ten miles round but what had found him successful and faithless") undoubtedly alerted the eighteenth-century reader and should have warned the Vicar about the true nature of this rake. Although apprehensive at first, Dr. Primrose gradually comes to accept him and his friends, Lady Blarney and Miss Carolina Wilelmina Amelia Skeggs.

In other respects the Vicar also demonstrates that he neither understands mankind nor the ways of the world. Believing that Moses is a shrewd trader, he sends his son to the fair to sell the family colt and to purchase a younger, more attractive horse. After Moses has been swindled

into buying some worthless green spectacles, the Vicar decides to sell the remaining horse, Blackberry. Neither his son's experience nor Mrs. Primrose's advice serves as ample warning once the ingenuous cleryman has been referred to as "the great Primrose, that courageous monogamist, who had been the bulwark of the Church" (p. 73).

Following his folly at the fair, the Vicar continues in his own simple, credulous fashion. First, Burchell's letter is misinterpreted, then transparent snares are set to entice the rake into marriage, and finally Olivia is forced into a situation which causes her to run away with the Squire. At this point, through his own simplicity, the Vicar has lost his fortune, his daughter, his intended daughter-in-law, and nearly all of his material possessions. The wheels have also been set in motion for the final jail scene where the Vicar is confronted with even

more overwhelming disasters.

The reason for reviewing the action in the first half of the novel is to show how the sequence of events lends itself to the interpretation that Goldsmith was planning to write a satire on idealism. The "generous, credulous, simple, and inoffensive" Dr. Primrose is clearly no match for the world. As such, he took his place among numerous other eighteenth-century characters who eventually discover that "no man can be good enough to enable him to neglect the rules of prudence." This viewpointthat virtue by itself was not sufficient to withstand the temptations of life and the malice of people-was anti-sentimental in its ridicule of the supremacy of righteousness and the complacent trust in the inherent goodness of mankind. The eighteenth-century term "prudence" suggested the practical or worldly wisdom

^{&#}x27;Henry Fielding, The History of Tom Jones (New York, 1903), I, 132. Others who learn the lessons of prudence include Peregrine Pickle, Roderick Random, Bersy Thoughtless, and David Simple.

needed to live securely and happily in the real world.

The first half of The Vicar, therefore, implies by its sequence of episodes that Goldsmith was concerned with the prudence theme. The protagonist finds himself involved in a series of mishaps, nearly all of which are complicated and compounded by his own innocence, benevolence, and credulity. The basic handling of the plot is realistic rather than sentimental. Quite clearly, readers are to laugh at the honest, virtuous simpleton who suffers because he lacks worldly wisdom. Goldsmith's interest in this theme is further evident in his treatment of other characters and in several explicit statements.

The model figure in the novel is Sir William Thornhill, who has solved his own personal problems and eventually resolves those of the Primrose family. Formerly he had labored under "a sickly sensibility," he had carried "benevolence to an excess," he had innocently "loved all mankind," and although he had "talked like a man of sense, his actions were those of a fool" (p. 16). As a result of his experiences and his travels, Sir William learns the lessons of prudence.

Another who flounders before he is indoctrinated into the ways of the world is the Vicar's eldest son, George. Armed with his father's sentimental advice ("never saw I the righteous man forsaken, or his seed begging their bread"), George, like the Vicar and Sir William, stumbles through a series of mishaps. After failing as a writer because he is unwilling to turn out pieces of "fruitful mediocrity," he discovers that his inability to flatter makes him ill-suited to be a companion, and that his simplicity results in his almost being shipped to an American plantation. Unable to teach English to the Dutch, and Greek to the Italians, George finally learns about life through his experiences as a cognoscento,

a tutor, a traveling musician, a debator, and an actor.

Other members of the Primrose family, though to a lesser extent, belong to the pattern of the prudence theme. Olivia, "the child of simplicity," foolishly elopes with the Squire; Mrs. Primrose, ironically "extolled [for] her prudence," shares with her husband the responsibility for misjudging Burchell and others; Moses, "a discreet boy," loses in argumentation to the sophistic statements of the Squire and in the marketplace to the duplicity of Jenkinson; and although Sophia is probably named for the inherent wisdom she displays in perceiving Burchell's merit, she too is hoodwinked by "the ladies" and their tales of glamorous London.

The primary quality lacking in the Primroses is mentioned like a motif throughout the early part of the novel. The Vicar ironically praises his wife for "her prudence" and criticizes Mr. Wilmot for having only one virtue left, "which was prudence." The relative, who informs the Vicar of his lost fortune, suggests "that your prudence will enforce the necessity of dissembling, at least till your son has the lady's fortune secure" (p. 9). Shortly afterwards, the Vicar prefaces his remarks to his family on their moving to a new community by stating, "No prudence of ours could have prevented our late misfortune but prudence may do much in disappointing its effects" (p. 11). In all, the term is used in some fifteen instances in the first half of the novel and but twice in the second.

Linked with the emphasis on the importance of prudence is the corollary concept that virtue by itself is not sufficient to withstand the evils of the world. The general ineffectiveness and insignificance of virtue is dominant early in the novel. "No virtue was able to resist [the] arts and assiduity" of Squire Thornhill p. 13); Sir William Thornhill's passions were unfortunately "all on the side of virtue . . . [leading] to a romantic ex-

treme" (p. 16); and the news about Olivia's elopement reaches the Vicar just as he is extolling his "good and virtuous" children (p. 97). The chapter headings reiterate the ineffectiveness of virtue: "Scarcely any Virtue found to resist the Power of long and pleasing Temptation" (XVII) and "Happiness and Misery rather the result of Prudence than of Virtue in this life" (XXVIII).

The most complete rejection of the importance of simple virtue appears in a conversation between Burchell and Dr. Primrose. The latter asserts that "The ignorant peasant without fault is greater than the philosopher with many; for what is genius or courage without an heart? 'An honest man's the noblest work of God.' " Goldsmith's model character scorns this reasoning by deprecating Pope for the "hackneyed maxim" and by pointing out that scholars, statesmen, and "champions" with their faults should not be preferred to "the low mechanic, who laboriously plods on through life without censure or applause" (p. 81).

From the opening summary statement about the Vicar and his family to the point when he learns of Olivia's elopement, Goldsmith is concerned with the prudence theme. The gullibility of the Vicar, the experiences of Sir William Thornhill, the helplessness of George in his travels, the folly of Mrs. Primrose, the duplicity of Moses, and the deception of Olivia all combine with the repetition of the term "prudence" and the dis-paragement of simple virtue to suggest from an internal examination that Goldsmith was once again concerned with the necessity and importance of prudence, a theme that recurs throughout so much of his work.4

11

At almost the moment that the Vicar learns about Olivia's absence, the nature of his character changes. The sententious simpleton grows in stature even as he sinks deeper into calamity. With the exception of a single aside (p. 119) and a single incidence (pp. 173-174), he loses all of his comic qualities. No longer does he probe gently into the petty vanities of life. His dual role-that of ironic narrator commenting upon his own ingénu indiscretions-terminates. Although the novel continues to be told from the same point of view, the character describing his experiences has changed. From Olivia's absence, his follies are minimized; his wisdom and humanity are emphasized. He has been transformed into an authority on monarchy, commerce, drama, penology, and the criminal code. The quixotic simpleton, formerly armed with the sword of idealism, now becomes almost a tragic hero who attacks life with the bare knuckles of reality. Goldsmith is no longer interested in prudence. The focus of the novel has changed from a consideration of how man can achieve happiness and success to the more realistic concern about how man can accept and learn to tolerate the suffering and misery of his plight. As Professor Sherburn states, "Submission, intrepidity, fortitude, these are the lessons Goldsmith wishes us to learn. . . . " 5

Goldsmith's interest in this second theme is reflected in his treatment of the Vicar. Besides the external conflict already set in motion between Squire Thornhill and Dr. Primrose, an internal conflict, characteristic of tragedy, is established. Commencing with the news about Olivia, the Vicar passes through a series of spiritual crises. In each of these, he reacts violently, is consoled and comforted by others, and finally regains control of himself.

The first situation finds him lamenting the loss of Olivia in these words: "My children, go and be miserable; for we

^{&#}x27;W. F. Gallaway, "The Sentimentalism of Goldsmith," PMLA, 48 (1933), 1167-1181.

¹George Sherburn, "The Restoration and Eighteenth Century," A Literary History of England, ed. Albert C. Baugh (New York, 1948), p. 1061.

shall never enjoy one hour more. And oh, may Heaven's everlasting fury light upon him and his! thus to rob me of my child! . . . Go, my children, go and be miserable and infamous; for my heart is broken within me!" (pp. 97-98).

Moses calls upon his father to display "fortitude" and Mrs. Primrose urges her husband to consult the Bible. The Vicar finally manages to control himself after Moses tells him, "Your rage is too violent" and "It ill suited you and your reverend character thus to curse your greatest enemy" (p. 98).

The same pattern is repeated later in the story when the Vicar learns that his other daughter, Sophia, has been abducted. Once again he shouts his hatred at the wrong-doer, bemoans his abject state, and is unable to restrain himself. For the second time he is pacified and solaced by his wife and Moses.

The third episode is precipitated by the appearance of George in chains, wounded, and condemned to die. Losing all control of himself, the Vicar cries out, "Oh that this sight could break my heart at once and let me die" (p. 187).

George rebukes his father with the same words that Moses had employed previously, "Where, Sir, is your fortitude?" (p. 187).

But the Vicar cannot compose himself; his grief and anguish provoke a violent, wrathful outcry, "May all the curses that ever sunk a soul fall heavy upon the murderer of my children! May he live, like me, to see ——" (p. 188).

George interrupts, reminds his father of "your age, your holy calling," and points out that "you have often charmed me with your lessons of fortitude; let me now, Sir, find them in your example" (p. 189).

These three situations exemplify the novel's internal conflict generated by Goldsmith's concern with the fortitude theme in the second part of the work. The climax follows swiftly with its mo-

ment of illumination signalled by the immediacy of the Vicar's changed outlook: "I am now raised above this world.... From this moment.... I now see and am convinced...." (p. 189; the italics are mine).

The Vicar's lengthy thematic speech in the following chapter (XXIX) is significant in the light of the previous discussion because it resolves the problem created in the three episodes. It is important to the Vicar's personal spiritual crisis because it brings about the new realization that life is to be endured and that man must resign himself to probable discomfort and distress. It is, however, irrelevant to the external conflict, the Primrose-Squire Thornhill struggle, because it serves no function on this plot level. Artistically it is a blemish but from the standpoint of Goldsmith's changing conception of his central character and of his theme, the sermon is essential, vital, and important.

This fortitude theme developed from the altered nature of the Vicar. He is no longer the mild, calm, gentle, ironic individual who quietly and dispassionately lost his fortune and accepted deceit and chicanery. The protagonist of the second half of the novel is a disturbed, provoked, wrathful figure who curses his enemies and lacks the inner resources necessary to face his trials. The conflict, therefore, grows out of the Vicar's spiritual crisis and is resolved by the prison sermon. Theoretically, the Vicar, believing his own pronouncements about fortitude, submissions, and trust in the Eternal, will be able to withstand any new vicissitude. Because Goldsmith did not subject his character to another test, the contrivance of the happy ending has usually obscured the character transformation.

Ш

What has already been indicated about the change in the central character and in the theme of *The Vicar* should not be interpreted as applying to the outline of the plot. The structure of the action as distinct from the actors and from the meaning of the work remained intact. Commencing with the loss of the Vicar's fortune and the dissolution of George's marriage, the outline of the action is sketched. By chapter V, the Primroses have moved, George has departed, Burchell and Squire Thornhill have been introduced, and the ending has been foreshadowed. To readers of eighteenthcentury novels, the plot is clear: Burchell, the prudent individual, will eventually rescue the "generous, credulous, simple, and inoffensive" Primroses from the snares of the rake, Squire Thornhill. In this process, the Vicar will exchange his naive belief in the goodness of mankind for a more mature and sophisticated conception of humanity. Olivia will realize the importance of discretion, which Sophia has seemingly innately acquired. George's experiences abroad will substantiate the lessons learned by his family at home. All of these developments are related to and unified by the theme of prudence which Goldsmith was interested in at the beginning of his novel.

Succeeding chapters contribute to the original plot scheme. Sophia and Olivia have their fortunes told by a gypsy, who predicts that the former will marry a baronet and the latter a squire. The Vicar protests too much at this foolishness for readers to ignore the device of the mocked prophecy clearly foreshadowing the novel's end.

Other evidence of Goldsmith's control over the plot scheme is apparent in his later use of insignificant incidents. Moses' folly at the fair is not only linked with the prudence theme but serves on the plot level to involve Mr. Flamborough in the swindle. The importance of this episode is revealed in the jail scene when Jenkinson, imprisoned on Flamborough's charges, befriends the Vicar and later exposes Squire Thornhill. Another trivial incident which plays a functional part later in the novel occurs in the seemingly

irrelevant episode in which Sir William Thornhill reprimands the traveling George Primrose for dueling. Later in the jail scene the purpose of the meeting is apparent when George serves to identify Burchell. Goldsmith also employs the incident to provide one final twist to the plot as the Vicar's son, previously rebuked for dueling, now faces capital punishment for his reckless action in killing a servant.

Besides the careful use of minor incidents, there is a cleverly conceived neoclassical balance and harmony in the novel. The plot runs full circle with the Vicar surrounded by his happy family at both beginning and end. Scenes and episodes are often matched with one another: Burchell's experiences parallel those of George; Squire Thornhill's affected pedantry is similar to that of Jenkinson; Burchell's early rescue of Sophia from the stream is repeated in his later liberation of her from Timothy Baxter; the Vicar establishes a routine for his family in jail as he had after their move from Wakefield; and Mrs. Primrose is as intent on carving at the wedding banquet as she had been originally at her "elegant" home in Wakefield.

Other evidence showing that Goldsmith had carefully planned his novel is ably presented by Hilles and Dahl. Indeed there no longer appears to be much validity to the numerous statements about the unplanned and unprepared ending of the novel.⁶

IV

The preceding discussion has indicated that although Goldsmith followed his original plot outline, he changed the theme of *The Vicar* and transformed the central character. Despite these incon-

[&]quot;See Walter Raleigh, The English Novel (London, 1922), p. 208; Charles H. Huffman, The Eighteenth Century Novel in Theory and Practice (Dayton, Va., 1924), p. 63; Harold Williams, Two Centuries of the English Novel (London, 1911), p. 109; and other studies.

sistencies, the novel is entertaining, interesting, and absorbing as a result of Goldsmith's ability to write dramatic scenes, to portray character vividly, and to expose mankind's foibles in a sympathetic, gently ironic, forgiving fashion.

The Vicar may be popular to countless readers through the centuries because of rather than in spite of its faults. It offers some of the detachment of the comic and some of the high seriousness of the tragic. It presents situations which are unbelievable to people who are believable. It mixes the idyllic atmosphere of a rural setting with the suggestive sordidness of city life and the bleakness of prison existence. It contains all the melodramatic trappings: disguises, villains, innocent heroines, seductions, swindles,

abductions, surprises, and last minute rescues. It counterbalances these by sober reflections on commerce, monarchy, dueling, drama, poetry, penal law, and prison reform. There is indeed God's abundance in Goldsmith's slim volume. The novel, therefore, may mean different things to different critics. But to all it should stand as a representation of life which views the real and the ideal, recognizes the good and does not deny the evil, and laughs at humanity but yet sympathizes with it. Goldsmith urges us to accept the way of the world and the nature of man; he believes that man's lot is to endure, to work, and to hope. The Vicar of Wakefield despite its inconsistencies has lived through the years to help humanity do just that.

The (Complete) Scarlet Letter

SAM S. BASKETT

"The Custom House" Introduction to The Scarlet Letter is often brushed aside as an artistic and thematic poor relation of the tale proper, mildly interesting in itself and undeniably there, but having little meaningful connection with the darkly resplendent main body of Hawthorne's masterpiece. The sketch has been called "inappropriate," (Robert "curious," (Roy Harvey Cantwell) Pearce) "a superfluous appendage" (Alfred S. Reid). It "rather oddly" precedes The Scarlet Letter (Richard Harter Fogle); it is a device to promote verisimilitude (Austin Warren); it is Hawthorne's "literary revenge" (George E. Woodberry)-and so on. Recently, however, several critics have given "The Custom House" a closer look. Larzer Ziff analyzes it as a kind of critical preface expressing the author's esthetic and moral theory.1 Charles Feidelson, Jr. notes that Hawthorne's discovery of the scarlet letter amid the old documents "signalizes not a retreat into the past but a penetration into persistent meaning"; and he concludes that the entire work becomes "a kind of exposition of the nature of symbolic perception." And Charles R. O'Donnell finds in the essay "a clue to a possible interpretation of *The Scarlet Letter* as a definition of the essential dilemma, either moral or esthetic, facing any sensitive person." These last comments, and particularly Mr. O'Donnell's, deal more respectfully with Hawthorne's

'Larzer Ziff, "The Ethical Dimensions of 'The Custom House," Modern Language Notes, LXXIII, (May, 1958), 338-344.

*Charles Feidelson, Jr., Symbolism and American Literature (Chicago, 1953), p. 10.

Charles R. O'Donnell, "Hawthorne and Dimmesdale: The Search for the Realm of Quiet," Nineteenth-Century Fiction, XIV, (March, 1960), 317-332.

An Assistant Professor of English at Michigan State, Dr. Baskett is the author of articles on Jack London, Poe, and James in many periodicals, including College English, and he edited the Rinehart edition of Jack London's Martin Eden. "Introduction," but like the more typical off-hand observations cited above, they also relegate it to a precariously tangential position in relation to the principal part of the book. The implication is that the reader of The Scarlet Letter, if he likes, may legitimately ignore "The Custom House." On the contrary, I believe that the reader who wishes to deal fully with what Hawthorne is saying has no such option. More than a "clue" to The Scarlet Letter, "The Custom House" clarifies and extends the meaning of the romance and thus should be read as a significant part of the total work.

In the two parts of his book Hawthorne weaves a pattern of repeated comparisons and contrasts which connect him with his ancestors, the present with the past, the world of the Custom House with the world of the New England theocracy. Most obviously, Salem and Boston are essentially the same setting; and the characters of "The Custom House" are the descendants of the Puritans. The soil of Salem is mingled with the "earthly substance" of his forefathers, Hawthorne remarks early in the sketch, and he goes on to describe in some detail the characteristics of his Puritan ancestors and their putative attitudes toward him. These allusions are reinforced by a number of less personal references which reflect Hawthorne's continuing concern with the connections between the Puritan past and his own era. When he describes "finding" the physical objects on which the Hester Prynne story is based, he adds that he also uncovered the "facts" upon which he constructed "Main Street." In this sketch written a few months before The Scarlet Letter, Hawthorne chronicles the growth of his native town "from infancy upward." "Main Street" is focussed on the past, for the machine which the author fancies as projecting the pictures of Salem breaks down just as the present is reached. "Alas," he comments ironically, "you know not the extent of your misfortune. The scenes to come were far better than the past." Written the year after The Scarlet Letter, The House of Seven Gables compensates for this "misfortune" by concentrating mostly on the present. Between these two works Hawthorne wrote the two parts of The Scarlet Letter which even more emphatically illustrate his preoccupation with the theme of the relation of the past and present.

The insistence with which Hawthorne presents this theme is seen in the number of time shifts which occur in both "The Custom House" and The Scarlet Letter. In the former, Hawthorne purportedly sets out to tell about his midnineteenth-century present. Actually the past invades this present with Faulknerian persistence. In the early pages while discussing his ancestors, Hawthorne switches back and forth from 1850 to various points in the past at least a dozen times. The lives of the Custom House denizens, significantly, are not so deeply rooted in the past, but there is a continual flow of references to times twenty, forty, sixty, seventy years earlier. In approaching the Hester Prynne materials, Hawthorne leads the reader back to the immediate past, then to the Revolution and eventually to the mid-seventeenth century via the Custom House records; and while Hawthorne discusses these materials, his mind alternately considers them in their supposed historical context and as they impinge on and even define his own present predicament. The Scarlet Letter, of course, is ostensibly set in the seventeenth century. On a score of occasions, however, the author halts his story and draws an explicit contrast between seventeenth- and nineteenthcentury New England life. Hawthorne thus does not allow the reader of The Scarlet Letter to forget the 1850 "present" just as he does not allow the reader of "The Custom House" to forget the

Several symbols, in The Scarlet Letter and elsewhere, suggest the differences

which Hawthorne saw between the Puritans and nineteenth-century Americans. The scarlet letter itself is a vivid emblem of the Puritan belief that no individual action occurs outside the purview of the theocratic society. Such a belief, as the Puritan jail and pillory signify, can lead to a rigid, somber existence. It was, withal, an existence with meaning, a meaning symbolized by the Puritan meeting house, the vantage point from which civil and religious authorities look down on the scaffold, the jail and the market place.4 The symbolic Election Day procession at the end of The Scarlet Letter provides yet another image of the "stability," "dignity," and "integrity" of a society unfragmented into religious, political and economic components; for the destination of the procession is the meeting house and Dimmesdale's "Election Sermon." Secular and religious election are inseparable.

Hawthorne derisively hints at what he considers to be the identifying characteristic of his own community in the final lines of "Main Street." He chiefly regrets the broken wire of the mechanism, he assures the reader, because he is thus unable to show "the night of the grand illumination for General Taylor's triumph"-the triumph, it is recalled, which led to Hawthorne's dismissal from the Custom House. This election parade apparently symbolizes the petty, political present for Hawthorne, as in effect does the pointless shuffling through life of the Custom House officials, in contrast to the more significant procession of their ancestors. The scarlet letter reappears in "The Custom House" as a meaningless rag, its very stitch "a now

Over the entrance [of the Custom House hovers an enormous specimen of the American eagle, with outspread wings, a shield before her breast, and, if I recollect aright, a bunch of intermingled thunderbolts and barbed arrows in each claw. With the customary infirmity of temper that characterizes this unhappy fowl, she appears, by . . . the general truculency of her attitude, to threaten mischief to the inoffensive community; and especially to warn all citizens, careful of their safety, against intruding on the premises which she overshadows with her wings. Nevertheless, vixenly as she looks, many people are seeking, at this moment, to shelter themselves under the wings of the federal eagle; imagining, I presume, that her bosom has all the softness and snugness of an eider-down pillow. But she has no great tenderness, even in her best of moods, and, sooner or later . . . is apt to fling off her nestlings, with a scratch of her claw, a dab of her beak, or a rankling wound from her barbed arrows.

Moreover, there is a fate even worse than to be attacked by the American eagle: to be nestled by it. Those who lean on the arm of the Republic, Hawthorne remarks, find that they lose their strength. "Suffice it here to say, that a Custom-House officer . . . [by] the very nature

forgotten art." The principal symbol of the essay, of course, is the Custom House itself, and Hawthorne makes it represent the life of nineteenth-century America, as the scarlet letter and the meeting house had once represented the cosmic quest of Puritan New England. The structure overlooks a dilapidated wharf and grassgrown walks. It is not merely an indication of decay, however. Salem and the Custom House in their deteriorated state are an inconsequential and somewhat pathetic microcosm of a characteristically political as opposed to a religious society. In this later community judgment and punishment are awarded capriciously, chaotically, without reference to an ultimate framework.

^{&#}x27;In "Main Street" Hawthorne describes the Puritan meeting house in these terms: "Their house of worship, like their ceremonial, was naked, simple, and severe. But the zeal of a recovered faith burned like a lamp within their hearts, enriching everything around them with its radiance; making of these new walls, and this narrow compass, its own cathedral. . . ."

of his business, which—though, I trust, an honest one—is of such a sort that he does not share in the united effort of mankind."

This lack of a sense of participation in the human community leads to a pointless, isolated life. Salem of the 1840's is less austere than Puritan Boston, but to Hawthorne it is certainly no more conducive to the good life. The concern with ultimate values, however rigorous and mistaken the conclusions growing out of that concern, has sadly deteriorated: the modus vivendi of nineteenth-century Salem is a shallow commercialism. This contrast is made emphatically in the description of the two market places. After calling attention to the market place in The Scarlet Letter by the title of the second chapter, Hawthorne ignores all that would seemingly be characteristic of a market place and describes the jail, the pillory, and eventually the meeting house on whose balcony appear-in concerted effort to save Hester's soul-political and religious leaders. In the Puritan society, the institutions of judgment and salvation, of ultimate purpose, dominate the scene of getting and spending. In Salem, it is the Custom House, itself a symbol of commercial activity, which overlooks the market place, "the shops of grocers, block-makers, slop-sellers, and ship chandlers." The market place of The Scarlet Letter, there an instrument entirely subordinate to great purposes, has become in "The Custom House" the way of life, the irony of each part of Hawthorne's description becoming fully apparent in the context of the other part.

Hawthorne's characterization of those for whom such activity has become the purpose of life firmly establishes his point.

Here, too, comes his [the shipmaster's] owner, cheerful or sombre, gracious or in the sulks, accordingly as his scheme of the now accomplished voyage has been realized in merchandise that will readily be turned to gold, or has buried him under a bulk of incommodities, such as nobody will care to rid him of. Here, likewise,—the germ of the wrinkle-browed, grizzly-bearded, care-worn merchant,—we have the smart young clerk, who gets the taste of traffic as a wolf-cub does of blood, and already sends adventures in his master's ships, when he had better be sailing mimic-boats upon a mill-pond.

Such are the men of eminence in Salem, and by implication Hawthorne raises the question as to which is preferable, the venerable John Wilson and the sensitive Dimmesdale, or the "wrinkle-browed, grizzly-bearded, care-worn merchant" and the bright young "wolf-cub" clerk. Moreover, Hawthorne extends the contrast of the kind of life that the two communities have developed. From the "set of wearisome old souls, who had gathered nothing worth preservation from their varied experience of life," the pawns of trivial party politics, Hawthorne singles out three for fuller attention. The octogenarian Inspector is the complete materialist. He is notable for

the rare perfection of his animal nature, the moderate proportion of intellect, and the very trifling admixture of moral and spiritual ingredients; these latter qualities, indeed, being in barely enough measure to keep the old gentleman from walking on all-fours. He possessed no power of thought, no depth of feeling, no troublesome sensibilities. . . .

The Collector, the "gallant old General," fares better at Hawthorne's pen. Larzer Ziff sees him as a peg on which Hawthorne hangs his formula for the good life because he does, apparently, have an inner life. The general, certainly, is a better man than the Inspector. But Hawthorne emphazises his basic limitations. "His spirit could never . . . have been characterized by an uneasy activity," — he is "the man of true and simple energy." If this is the good life, it is the

good life with severe restrictions. The Collector may be "remote" from the Custom House, but "the scenes and sounds" he recalls are revealingly childish: "The evolutions of the parade; the tumult of the battle; the flourish of old, heroic music. . . . " In The Scarlet Letter, soldiers are accorded an "honorable fame," "yet the men of civil eminence ... were far better worth a thoughtful observer's eye"; for they have "a stamp of majesty that made the warrior's haughty stride look vulgar, if not absurd." In this context, the old General's puerile musings should not be given too much weight. Finally, Hawthorne describes the one man who, as he is "thoroughly adapted" to the Custom House, gave him "a new idea of talent."

His gifts were emphatically those of a man of business; prompt, acute, clearminded; with an eye that saw through all perplexities, and a faculty of arrangement that made them vanish, as by the waving of an enchanter's wand. Bred up from boyhood in the Custom House, it was his proper field of activity; and the many intricacies of business, so harassing to the interloper, presented themselves before him with the regularity of a perfectly comprehended system. . . . With an easy condescension, and a kind forebearance towards our stupidity,-which, to his order of mind, must have seemed little short of crime,-would he forthwith, by the merest touch of his finger, make the incomprehensible as clear as daylight.

Superficially different from each other, these three Custom House characters are closely akin in their shallow ethical sense, and they are alike in contrasting with the "men of civil eminence" who march in the seventeenth-century Election Day procession. "It was an age," Hawthorne summarizes, "when what we call talent had far less consideration than now, but the massive materials which produce stability and dignity of character a great deal more."

Hawthorne turns briefly from his portrayal of the men of business, the politicians, the materialists-from the "dregs" of the Puritan wine-to the "fumes." He finds transcendentalism scarcely better as an approach to the good life than the natural, uncontemplative existence. "Even the old Inspector was desirable, as a change of diet, to the man who had known Alcott." In short, wherever Hawthorne looks in the nineteenth century, he discovers little that compares favorably with the Puritan way. This sharp contrast between the two societies, however, is really secondary to Hawthorne's main concern throughout the book. Actually, "The Custom House" and The Scarlet Letter are coupled more by an underlying similarity than by the external ironic contrast. For Hawthorne himself in a sense is the major character in the romance as well as in the sketch; and in both parts of the book the theme is the same: the relation of the individual to whatever the society, irrespective of its nature, in which he finds himself.

At the beginning of "The Custom House" Hawthorne states that an author must establish "some true relation with his audience," "the few who will understand him," even though he keeps the "inmost Me" behind the veil of native reserve. But once in his account, as he describes finding the scarlet letter, Hawthorne for a moment drops his detached, ironic manner and allows the reader a glimpse behind the veil. Looking at the faded rag of scarlet cloth and musing over the meaning of the "mystic symbol," he says,

I happened to place it on my breast. It seemed to me,—the reader may smile, but he must not doubt my word,—it seemed to me, then, that I experienced a sensation not altogether physical, yet almost so, as of burning heat; and as if the letter were not of red cloth, but red-hot iron. I shuddered, and involuntarily let it fall upon the floor.

The reader "may smile," but Hawthorne is not merely indulging his romantic fancy; his tone is deadly serious. Why is Hawthorne so affected by the letter of guilt which Hester, Dimmesdale, and in a sense even Chillingworth, also wear? What is he trying to confess? Both "The Custom House" and The Scarlet Letter supply the answer-the same answer. In this scene Hawthorne at once expresses his alienation from his contemporaries from both the transcendentalists who ignore guilt and the materialists who subsist on the subhuman level-and acknowledges his desire to end that alienation. In his actions as well as his writing, Hawthorne repeatedly made evident his strong sense of being at cross purposes with his age. He did live a mainly solitary twelve years as a young man in Salem. He did frequently mention his "home-feeling" for the past. His sense of isolation had not been lessened by his "grievous thralldom" at the Boston Custom House, nor by his failure to achieve a feeling of community with the transcendentalists at Brook Farm; and this sense was further aggravated by his experience with the workaday world at the Salem Custom House. Hawthorne's predicament, so apparent throughout "The Custom House," is also partly the result of his self-consciousness about his role as a writer. Of his writing, the core of his existence, his associates are unaware. "None of them, I presume, had ever read a page of my inditing, or would have cared a fig the more for me if they had read them all." In addition, he is certain that his Puritan forebears would have strongly disapproved of his vocation.

"What is he?" murmurs one gray shadow of my forefathers to the other. "A writer of story-books! What kind of business in life,—what mode of glorifying God, or being serviceable to mankind in his day and generation,—may that be? Why the degenerate fellow might as well have been a

fiddler." Such are the compliments bandied between my great-grandsires and myself, across the gulf of time!

Contemptuous of the values of his associates, ambivalent in his attitude toward the past, unsure of his place in society as a writer, the Hawthorne who condemns the Custom-House officer for not participating in the main stream of human endeavor stands fearfully alone in an unused room of the Custom House with the faded letter on his breast-the figure of the Alienated Artist. We can say "fearfully," for Hawthorne frequently reiterated his horror of isolation, his belief that man is a naturally sociable being whose mental energies are fully aroused only in society; and this was a time of crisis for Hawthorne as he was making the effort that led to his fuller involvement with his fellow man in the 1850's. Lawrence Hall has called Hawthorne's Salem experience "invigorating because it awoke in him the uncompromising spirit of economic individualism" of his age. This experience "shattered almost completely the old impudence with which [Hawthorne] had criticized the materialistic, utilitarian ways of his countrymen."5 Two weeks before completing The Scarlet Letter Hawthorne wrote George Stillman Hillard that "illsuccess in life is really and justly a matter of shame. . . . Nobody has a right to live in the world, unless he be strong and able, and applies his ability to good purpose." In "The Custom House" Hawthorne calls it "weakness and cowardice to murmur at" the existing system "unless a different system be proclaimed." And he excoriated himself for not having made the "wiser effort"

to seek, resolutely, the true and indestructible value that lay hidden in

^{*}Lawrence Sargent Hall, Hawthorne, Critic of Society (New Haven, Conn., 1944), pp. viii-ix, p. 43.

viii-ix, p. 43.
This letter, dated January 20, 1850, is printed in the Autograph Edition (New York, 1900), XVII, 432-433.

the petty and wearisome incidents, and ordinary characters, with which I was now conversant. The fault was mine. The page of life that was spread out before me seemed dull and commonplace, only because I had not fathomed its deeper import. A better book than I shall ever write was there. . . .

Hawthorne's growing, if unwilling, understanding that, despite his desire for withdrawal from an uncongenial "system," he must somehow establish a significant, self-nurturing relation with it, is intensely signified when he places the scarlet letter on his breast. His expiation has begun, albeit furtively; the letter has started to do its work. He relates that he achieved partial relief from "this incident": it recalled his mind, "in some degree, to the old track." Moreover, Hawthorne undertook a more public, if still somewhat veiled, expiation. This expiation is The Scarlet Letter and, for "the few who will understand him" "The Custom House." In the characterizations of Hester, Dimmesdale and Chillingworth, Hawthorne objectifies the several facets of his problem. Charles O'Donnell has analyzed the similar situations of Hawthorne and Dimmesdale; equally significant is the parallel between Hawthorne's predicament and that of each of the other major characters in The Scarlet Letter. Like Chillingworth, the Custom-House Hawthorne is capable of arrogant detachment from the entire community; and like him he can probe coldly and analytically into his associates and then sit in icy judgment on them. It is easy to see in "The Custom House" that the sin of intellectual and moral pride is one of the reasons for Hawthorne's alienation from his fellow man: he comes close to violating the sanctity of the human heart-at least so thought those who had sat unwittingly for his scapel-like pen. Like Dimmesdale and Hester, the Custom-House Hawthorne has an ambivalent attitude toward his alienation from his community and a

possible expiation leading to reunion. As they are products of the Puritan way of life, so Hawthorne is a man of the nineteenth-century; as they violate the rules of that way of life and are thus rendered less effective members of the community, so Hawthorne denies many of the values of his age (here he is closer to Hester than to Dimmesdale), and thereby places himself outside its pale. Like Dimmesdale, Hawthorne has lived a hypocritical life among his associates; and, like Dimmesdale, after having scourged himself for years with his sensitivity, Hawthorne finally brings himself to a two-fold expiation, in the darkness of a romance purportedly dealing with the dim past, and in the ambiguous daylight of "The Custom House." Like Hester, whom Hawthorne repeatedly describes as an artist and who feels that what she had done had a consecration of its own, so Hawthorne tends to believe that as an artist he also is above the judgment of his society. And, like Hester, Hawthorne finally brings himself to the recognition that though he remains somewhat apart from his contemporaries, he must learn to live in some sort of relation with them. In other words, the similarity of Dimmesdale's situation with Hawthorne's own is but one of the many significant links between the two parts of Hawthorne's book. O'Donnell has observed that the action after Dimmesdale begins his confession "takes on all the qualities of a formal drama," that in effect Dimmesdale creates a form to express his experience, and "through this form he finds his own victory, his own salvation." The Scarlet Letter, Hawthorne's entire Puritan story, may be said to bear exactly this relation to the author's "confession" scene in "The Custom House."

These representative connections between "The Custom House" and *The* Scarlet Letter—the list might be considerably lengthened—indicate that the sketch almost continuously impinges on the romance. In the drama of *The Scar*-

let Letter, "The Custom House" serves as a prologue informing the scenes that follow; and then eventually it becomes an epilogue offering further comment on what has taken place. "The Custom House," far from being a dispensable curiosity-there are dozens of full dress critical examinations of The Scarlet Letter which either ignore it or dismiss it in a sentence or so-can be read profitably both before and after the main tale. Although the sketch in a sense narrows and personalizes the meaning of The Scarlet Letter, in a more significant sense it broadens and objectifies that meaning. What Hawthorne had learned as an individual he projects as having universal significance. In two quite different societies, one shaped too much by "superhuman" speculation, the other too much by "subhuman" appetency, for the person of intelligence, artistic individuality and moral awareness, the "human" problem remains. "The Custom House" makes it impossible to conclude that The Scarlet Letter is mainly and ultimately about the Puritan way of life, just as the rest of the book makes it impossible to conclude that in the introduction Hawthorne is rather inexplicably and even unfortunately gratifying a literary and personal whim. Rather, the total work dramatizes his dearly bought conviction that the artist of life, whether the early Puritan in Boston or Nathaniel Hawthorne in General Taylor's Salem, must paradoxically remain true to his genius and then, having inevitably committed this first sin of bubris, somehow achieve expiation to enable him to participate in the often rather dubious, and even at times shabby, "united effort of mankind."

Conrad's Jonahs

FREDERIC J. MASBACK

If anything in the Bible were to make a strong appeal to the imagination of Joseph Conrad, it would be reasonable to expect it to be the Book of Jonah. It is, for one thing, the only book of the Bible in which a good deal of the action is concerned with the sea, ships, and sailors. Secondly, the legend of Jonah can be read and understood as a symbolization of one of the great archetypal myths—the night journey, an important theme in Conrad's work.¹ The third reason why the Book of Jonah could

have affected Conrad profoundly is that it must have disturbed and embarrassed him deeply—so deeply, in fact, that it could be said that he came close to rewriting the Book of Jonah to suit his own purposes in both *The Shadow Line* and *The Nigger of the Narcissus*.

The nearest thing to an unforgivable sin for Conrad was a violation of trust, a breaching of the solidarity which should exist among men united in a common endeavor or idea. One reason why ships were so important to him was his belief that ships required and helped to create this feeling of solidarity in men. A group of men, brought together by chance, of varying backgrounds and temperaments,

¹A good collection of symbolic treatments and analyses of the Jonah legend may be found in *Literary Symbolism*, ed. Maurice Beebe (1960), pp. 73-90. See also Albert J. Guerard, *Comrad the Novelist* (1958) for a discussion of the night journey theme in Conrad. Guerard also points out a few parallels between the Jonah story and Conrad's work, particularly *The Nigger of the Narcissus*.

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would for a length of time be united in a common endeavor, a common love. The ship becomes their world, and they must depend upon it and each other in an environment which can destroy them. And when that environment becomes most destructive, in the times of greatest stress, it becomes more important than ever for men to exhibit their solidarity.

It is precisely at the moment of greatest stress when Jonah's shipmates forsake him and throw him overboard to appease the angry sea. They cannot be blamed too harshly; there are many extenuating circumstances. Jonah is a passenger rather than a shipmate; he admits that his defiance of God's will has led to the present predicament; he even tells the sailors that they must throw him overboard in order to calm the seas. Even then, the sailors are reluctant to perform such an act, and they once more attempt to get back to land without resorting to such an expedient, but fail. Finally, they beseech the Lord not to hold their contemplated action against them, once more protesting that this is not their idea. Nevertheless, the incontrovertible fact remains that the crew of a ship, to whom a passenger had entrusted his safety, violates this trust in a moment of great stress.

Conrad explored this whole matter of trust and solidarity in many of his books, particularly the tales of the sea. In Lord Jim and Typhoon, for example, the situations which Conrad creates to test the mettle of his protagonists are remarkably similar. The cargo of both the Patna and the Nan-Shan is human, though the crews of these two ships do not seem to appreciate this detail until the moment of stress arrives. Then it suddenly occurs to them that the Arab pilgrims and the Chinese coolies are not bales of hay nor bolts of cloth; they have a group of human beings on board, human beings who have entrusted themselves to the crew and ship for a safe passage. The imaginative and sensitive

Jim fails in his duty in this moment of truth, and the failure haunts him for the rest of his life. In a similar situation, the dull and unimaginative Captain Mac-Whirr recognizes that he has a duty towards the Chinese coolies who are careening about like a cargo broken loose. It is, in his phrase, "only fair" to give the Chinamen the same chance as the crew, and it is this act, not done out of heroism but simply because it is right, which makes him more of a man than Jim.

In other tales, Conrad portrays solidarity and trust as it exists man to man. Whatever the differences between the ways Jim and Captain MacWhirr act, they are alike in regarding the human cargo for which they are responsible as a mass rather than as individuals; the usual way of thinking of the Arabs or the Chinese is as "poor devils." The problem of solidarity becomes much more pointed and crucial when it becomes less abstract, when it centers in one man rather than in hundreds. In such stories as "The End of the Tether," "Heart of Darkness," and "The Secret Sharer," quite a few similarities emerge concerning the nature and effect of a close bond between two men. First of all, the relationship is between a man who is in command of a ship or a boat and another man who apparently is in a subservient position, and it would appear at first that the captain of the ship has picked the most unlikely person on it with whom to establish rapport. It soon becomes evident, however, that the relationship is really the only stable one on board the entire ship. In "The End of the Tether" the Sofala is a breeding place of intrigue and corruption; only the relationship between Captain Whalley and his Malay boatswain has any substance. Marlow disdains the group of puny, frightened pilgrims who accompany him upriver in the absurd little steamboat, and only his relationship with his native helmsman proves to have

some value. In "The Secret Sharer," the crew seems to be faintly hostile and certainly aloof towards the Captain, and his only satisfactory personal relationship on the ship is with Leggatt.

There is more to these relationships than simple personal satisfaction, however, although its importance should not be underestimated. In each case it is the Captain's first time on the particular ship he is commanding, a time when a friend is particularly welcome. More important, the friend performs a necessary service for the Captain and the ship by helping to steer the ship, particularly in times of peril and stress. This is obviously true in "The End of the Tether" and "Heart of Darkness," but it is also true in "The Secret Sharer." While Leggatt does not actually steer the ship in the same sense as the Malay Serang and the African native do, the white cap which the Captain had given to him floats free in the water, thus allowing the Captain to judge the movements of his ship by it. In each of these cases the steering of the ship is a cooperative venture; although the Captain seems to be completely in control, he leans more heavily on his companion than anyone else on the ship seems to realize. Marlow is most explicit in describing the kind of bond which actually exists:

Perhaps you will think it passing strange this regret for a savage who was no more account than a grain of sand in a black Sahara. Well, don't you see, he had done something, he had steered; for months I had him at my back-a help-an instrument. It was a kind of partnership. He steered for me-I had to look after him, I worried about his deficiencies, and thus a subtle bond had been created, of which I only became aware when it was suddenly broken. And the intimate profundity of that look he gave me when he received his hurt remains to this day in my memory-like a claim of distant kinship affirmed in a supreme moment.

More important even than the friendship and the help in steering the ship which each partner offers the Captain is another kind of steering, the steering of the Captain himself. Each Captain, as a result of his association with his companion, is given a new direction, new insights, sometimes even a new outlook on life. It is only because he knows that he can depend on his Malay that Captain Whalley is able to leave his daughter's home, where he feels that he is considered to be a burden. It is through the insights that Marlow gradually gains about the natives, particularly through his relationships with them and the helmsman on the boat, that he is able to realize the enormity of Kurtz's crime. And most obviously of all, through his relationship with Leggatt the Captain in "The Secret Sharer" discovers himself and truly becomes the master both of himself and of his ship.

Each Captain, in his moment of darkness, is enlightened by his companion. It matters little whether the darkness is caused by actual blindness as in "The End of the Tether," by the overwhelming physical blackness as in "Heart of Darkness," or by a lack of inward vision and self-understanding as in "The Secret Sharer." No matter what the cause of the darkness, the bringer of the saving light is the humble companion. Despite the beneficial results accruing from the solidarity existing between two men, it is not the highest form which solidarity can achieve. After all, there may be elements of self-interest and even selfishness in this kind-the simple desire of men for reassurance and companionship in times of need. Nor is Car in Mac-Whirr's action an example of solidarity as much as it is simply evidence of his conception of duty.

The most exacting test of solidarity occurs in a situation comparable to that which faced the crew of Jonah's ship. Here the entire ship is in mortal danger, and perhaps can be saved by the sacri-

fice of one man, and that man an admitted outcast and fugitive. Moreover, no single man on the ship need bear the burden for abandoning this man, since the entire crew will have concurred in the action. Finally, the whole situation can be easily blamed on supernatural forces, and the crew will be able to justify its action on the grounds that it is simply an agent of God's justice. Thus, all the cards are stacked against this one man and everything conspires against him, urging that he be cut off from his fellow men-everything, that is, except one feeling, perhaps vague, perhaps even illogical, but all important for Conrad-"the latent feeling of fellowship with all creation—and to the subtle but invincible conviction of solidarity that knits together the loneliness of innumerable hearts, to the solidarity in dreams, in joy, in sorrow, in aspirations, in illusions, in hope, in fear, which binds men to each other, which binds together all humanity." When the crew of Jonah's ship throws him overboard, they violate this all-important code of mankind.

In The Shadow Line and The Nigger of the Narcissus, Conrad used almost all of the basic ingredients of the Jonah story with one important difference-he changed the ending. In each case, the ship is in great danger, and the danger seems to be the result of almost supernatural forces stirred to their greatest ire by just one man. That man, in each of these novels, although theoretically an able-bodied seaman, is disabled, and thus in reality is a passenger on the ship like Jonah. In each case, the Jonah figures are desperately trying to get away from the spot where they first boarded the ship, ostensibly to return home. They, like Jonah, are physically isolated from the rest of the crew, and they complete their isolation by exhibiting undue surliness in the face of kindness. And yet, despite all the provocation, the crews of these two ships never forsake their Jonahs; indeed, it can be assumed

that it is only because they do not forsake their Jonahs that the crews and the ships complete their journeys safely.

The Jonah of the ship in The Shadow Line is the chief mate, Mr. Burns, while the Jonah of the Narcissus is the Negro sailor, Jimmy Wait. The names of Burns and Wait seem to be carefully chosen to sum up the fate of the respective ships which these two men seem to haunt. În The Shadow Line, the ship is besieged by burning heat, and the men of the crew are afflicted with burning fevers. In The Nigger of the Narcissus, the ship seems to be laboring under the burden of a heavy weight, and everything seems to be conspiring to hold the ship back from its destination. Until a favorable breeze comes up, the entire crew is doomed to do but one thing-

The initial appearance of each Jonah on his ship is mysterious, disquieting, and even ominous. Burns first appears to the ship's captain in The Shadow Line almost as an apparition, and the captain is quite disturbed by both his features and his attitude. Burns's face strikes the captain as being "pugnacious in (strange to say) a ghastly sort of way," and their uneasy conversation is almost a type of mental sparring. James Wait's first appearance on the Narcissus is just as ambiguous; the crew is one man short, but the mate doesn't know who it is because the last name on the roster is smudged. Although the bosun has checked the ship and has reported that no one is aboard who has not been accounted for, suddenly, out of the shadows, a voice calls "Wait!" It is James Wait and he claims that he is the last smudged name on the roster, and although no one is quite sure how he has gotten aboard or where he has been, he insists, "I belong to the ship." He is described as having "a head powerful and misshapen with a tormented and flattened face-a face pathetic and brutal:

the tragic, the mysterious, the repulsive mask of a nigger's soul."

Both men appear, therefore, as an interruption of the established order and tranquility of the ship, causing a distinct sense of discomfort and even shock by their sudden appearance, their unpleasant and almost frightening physical appearance, and their surly and evasive attitude. Although both men present themselves as part of the crew, it soon becomes apparent that they are not going to be available for any constructive work on the ship; although they appear to be in good health, they are actually sick, perhaps mortally sick men, Burns comes down with a severe case of fever, and Wait begins his coughing and calmly announces that he is going to die. Despite their sickness, both men are eager to make the voyage, presumably to get home. It is possible, however, that the urgency of their desire owes itself mostly to the necessity of fleeing from some-

Burns clearly is fleeing from the ghost of his former Captain-the man who was God while he commanded the ship-but whom Burns had defied. The new Captain realizes that Burns had taken the ship to Bankok rather than Singapore in order to escape authority, but Burns, like Ionah, tends to underestimate the reach of authority; it pursues him in the shape of the telegraph cable at the bottom of the Gulf where he had thought he had buried all authority. Wait, too, hints that his last experience on a ship left something to be desired. "Last ship-yes. I was out of sorts on the passage. See? It was easy. They paid me off in Calcutta, and the skipper made no bones about it either. . . . I got my money all right. Laid up fifty-eight days! The fools! O Lord! The fools! Paid right off." But neither man has really been "paid off"; both feel that they have hoodwinked their previous Captains and successfully defied authority, much as Jonah might have felt that he was getting

away with his defiance of God's will. But both men are, in a sense, marked men the minute they appear on their new ships, and soon the entire crew is aware that something is wrong.

Burns and Wait are set apart from the rest of the crew by their physical isolation, Burns in his cabin and Wait in the deck house, and as the ships' troubles increase, their isolation is even more marked as they, like the Biblical Jonah, seem almost afraid to show their faces. Not only are they physically isolated, but they seem to desire an emotional isolation too. Although the members of the crew are almost tender in their constant concern and care for them, they respond by becoming more abusive. The more they threaten, insult, and defy their shipmates, the more tender the shipmates become. Burns and Wait seem to be asking to be sacrificed like the Biblical Ionah, but their shipmates have nothing but compassion for them almost in spite of themselves. In the case of Wait, for example, they admit that although the "secret and ardent desire of our hearts was the desire to beat him viciously with our fists about the head," they actually "handled him as tenderly as though he had been made of glass."

Not only are the two Jonahs thoroughly unpleasant types, but there is reason to believe that they are indeed responsible for the ships' plights. Burns himself suggests that the ship is being plagued by the old Captain's spirit, and insists that the only way to survive is through defiance: "You can't slink past the old murderous ruffian. It isn't the way. You must go for him boldy-as I did." But if Burns's estimation of the situation is correct, then the Captain's spirit can be assuaged only when his vengeance is complete against the man who defied him and finally had consigned him to his watery grave-Burns. On the Narcissus, the old and wise Singleton explains that the ship is encountering head winds because Jimmy Wait does not want to die and knows the first sight of land will kill him, and the fanatical cook is convinced that Jimmy is possessed by the devil. But if the superstitious sailors half believe that it is Burns's presence on board which is infuriating the spirit of the old Captain, if they agree that it is Wait's struggle for life which is holding back the ship, they nevertheless do not take the alternative of the Biblical sailors. They refuse to appease whatever supernatural powers are conspiring against them by breaking the bonds of solidarity.

Finally, without the crew's undertaking the drastic actions which Jonah's shipmates did, the fate of each ship is settled by what happens to the Jonah in the natural course of events. When Burns finally comes on deck, free from fever and free of his delusions, the ship suddenly seems to come alive with the wind, and that wind and Burns's return to health are clearly related: "He sat on the skylight looking desperately ill at first, but that strong breeze, before which the last remant of my crew had wilted down, seemed to blow a fresh stock of vigour into his frame with every gust. One could almost see the process.' And one can almost see the process which occurs when James Wait's body is finally consigned to the sea: "the ship rolled as if relieved of an unfair burden; the sails flapped," and almost immediately the wind comes up and the Narcissus has fair sailing from then on.

It seems evident that in these two novels Conrad was very much concerned with the problem of how a group of men should act when a single individual seems to be jeopardizing their very lives. If Conrad was consciously following the Jonah legend, there is little or no indication of it from references to the Biblical story to be found in the novels. There is, however, a passage in *The*

Nigger of the Narcissus which provides an interesting commentary upon the relation of these stories to the Book of Jonah. "The true peace of God begins at any spot a thousand miles from the nearest land; and when He sends there the messengers of His might it is not in terrible wrath against crime, presumption, and folly, but paternally, to chasten simple hearts—ignorant hearts that know nothing of life, and beat undisturbed by envy or greed."

If this statement is to be believed, the trials which the ships and crews in these two stories undergo are not the work of a wrathful God as in the Book of Jonah, but rather are educative and beneficial experiences which purify the human heart through tribulation. Ransome, the good sailor of The Shadow Line, leaves the ship cautiously, "in mortal fear of starting into sudden anger our common enemy it was his hard fate to carry consciously within his faithful breast." Our heart is the common enemy, not when it is physically weak as in Ransome's case, but when it is weak in our sense of devotion to and solidarity with our fellow man. Captain Giles points out to the young Captain in The Shadow Line that if he is to learn anything from his experience, he "will learn soon how not to be faint-hearted." A faint heartyes, that is the true enemy. Jonah's shipmates acted out of cowardice, but Conrad knew that the only hope for man is to act out of courage, out of a conviction of the solidarity of the human race. In one sense, then, these two novels are almost parables of now the race, the ship itself, must be saved. The books triumphantly reaffirm a belief in the individual dignity of every human being, even the Jonah, and suggest that only through this belief and the actions which such a belief demands can the human race attain its own salvation.

Madeline Among the Midshipmen

WILLIAM E. WILSON

One night not long ago, I found myself remembering for the first time in years a gruff and briny old sea-dog I served under for a while in the Second World War. I had been reading the poems of Percy Bysshe Shelley, and it was the Hymn to Intellectual Beauty that brought my old skipper to mind.

No finer officer than this Captain, U. S. N., ever sailed the seas, I am sure, but when I knew him he was Head of the Department of English, History, and Government at the United States Naval Academy. At the Academy, the Department of E., H., and G. is appropriately known as "the Bull Department," and I was assigned to it early in the war when BuPers decided I was more expendable with a book in my hand than while conning an LST. Why the Captain was assigned to that Department I do not know, unless it was because he had once read A Dissertation on Roast Pio.

"You ever read that thing about roast pork?" he always asked newcomers to the Department, as a test of their backgrounds in literature. "I thought it was a pretty good yarn when I was a Midshipman."

I admired the Captain. Indeed, I was grateful that he was my first skipper on shore duty, because he gave a salty atmosphere to Mahan Hall and almost justified the Academy's ironclad rule that we must think of walls as bulkheads, floors as decks, drinking fountains as scuttlebutts, and ourselves as Naval officers. Still, with all the ribbons on his broad chest, the Captain had never fought the campaign of iambic pentameter nor the battle of the synecdoche, nor had he navigated any closer to the main current of English Literature than Charles Lamb's little eddy about roast pig. It was therefore inevitable that the day he discovered Shelley in the Plebe reading assignments he blew all his stacks at once.

When he came steaming across the gangway to the Lit Deck in Mahan Hall that day, the Lit textbook in his hand and his eyes ablaze, we officers of the Lit Detail were so startled that we knocked over a half dozen chairs coming to attention.

"Tenshun!" shouted the Chairman of the Lit Detail, a Lieutenant, U. S. N. R., recently surfaced from the Harvard Graduate School; but we were already standing and as stiff as rigor mortis.

"What is this doing in here?" the Captain roared; and as he spoke he pounded the Lit text so hard with his fist that he knocked it out of his own hand.

The Chairman of the Lit Detail leaped to pick the book up.

"Find that fellow Shelley for me," the Captain commanded. "That thing about beauty."

Later, the Chairman of the Lit Detail said it was like looking for hay in a hay-stack. But he took a long shot and returned the book to the Captain opened to Hymn to Intellectual Beauty.

The Captain scanned the page till he found the lines he wanted.

"Now, hear this!" he bellowed, and began to read to us in a high falsetto, which he obviously intended to sound effeminate but which sounded, instead, more like a bosun with laryngitis:

"Sudden, thy shadow fell on me; I shrieked and clasped my hands with ecstasy."

Snapping the book shut, the Captain then glowered at each of us in turn, as if to ferret out any concealed admiration for the lines he had read. If there was any such admiration in that complement of men, it was not exposed. The officers of the Lit Detail, every man-jack of them—and the majority held Ph. D.'s in English—looked as if they had never before heard of Percy Bysshe Shelley.

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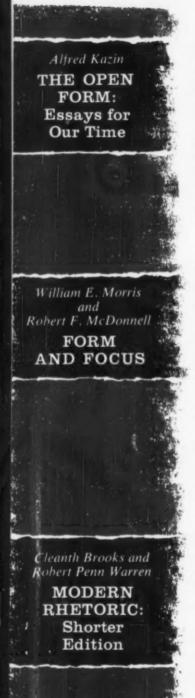
WORLD

College English, of all the académic fields, is most challenging in its demand for diversity and excellence in textbook publishing. During the past ten years this challenge has been particularly pronounced, for with the phenomenal increase in college enrollments came a rapid expansion of the English curriculum. New programs were devised, new textbooks were required.

Harcourt, Brace has kept pace with that growth indeed, has often anticipated it by publishing texts that actually shaped new courses. As a result, the instructor can turn to the Harcourt, Brace English List whether his syllabus calls for

a rhetoric ... or a reader ... a traditional handbook ... or an introduction to linguistics ... a sourcebook ... or a workbook ... a comprehensive anthology ... or a small "types" book ... a complete course in one volume ... or a supplemental guide ... a broad chronological survey ... or a "major writers" approach

Harcourt, Brace & World continues to focus on the needs of college English, as witness the publication this spring of nine new titles. You will find these books described on the following pages. We are pleased to present them to you, confident that our 1961 College English List will meet your standards of diversity and excellence in textbook publishing.



Mr. Alfred Kazin here brings together twenty-eight modern and wholly individual essays. "My aim throughout," he states in his Introduction, "has been to present the possibilities of the essay as a form for our time; and in order to show students just how sensitively and brilliantly the essay form can be handled, it has seemed to me important to demonstrate this through the work of those who are 'living' writers in the true sense—alive in the words they use, alive to the real issues of man's destiny today."

The Open Form covers a wide range of topics and interests: for example, Saul Bellow on our affluent society; Elizabeth Hardwick and Robert Lowell on Boston; D. W. Brogan on the Civil War—a fresh appraisal; Truman Capote on Russia as it is today; Vladimir Nabokov on Russia as it was before; C. P. Snow on "the two cultures." But not one of the twenty-eight essays was chosen for its topicality. Rather, what Mr. Kazin looked for—and found—was the writer who speaks from profound personal commitment, the writer who has the ability to make the reader see the hidden, the deeper, or the unexpected issue, the writer who uses the essay as an open form to discover what he himself thinks.

In addition to his Introduction, "The Essay as a Modern Form," Mr. Kazin provides separates headnotes to each essay.

Publication: March, 1961

IN THIS NEW ANTHOLOGY Professors Morris and McDonnell offer one possible solution to that most perplexing problem: how to teach freshmen to write. It is their conviction that an anthology for freshmen should exemplify both rhetoric and subject matter—thus, the fifty essays in Form and Focus are rhetorically and topically arranged. The student is presented with models of rhetorical form on topics within his range of perception and experience.

Form and Focus is divided into three main parts: Types of Writing, Methods of Development, and Research. The first two parts are subdivided into sections containing essays that deal with the same topic and illustrate the same rhetorical pattern. For example, in Part One the section on description includes four essays by Eric Sevareid, James Agee, Alfred Kazin, and Hal Borland—each related to the theme, "Hometown in Perspective." Under "Comparison and Contrast" in Part Two, the essays by Allen Jackson, Derek Colville, Mary McCarthy, and Aldous Huxley are concerned with similarities and differences between America and Europe.

ties and differences between America and Europe.

Part Three, Research, is closely tied in with the section on narration in Part One. The latter (whose general theme is "Struggles against the Sea") contains Stephen Crane's short story, "The Open Boat," while Part Three provides six critical articles on that story.

Each section is introduced by a brief explanation of the rhetorical pattern under consideration and is followed by suggestions for student themes related to the subject and rhetorical pattern of the section. In addition, there are questions after each essay that help the student analyze the theme, structure, and the style of the essay. The book will include a rhetorical index that will enable the instructor to find easily material on any particular writing technique—such as paragraph structure, theme, tone, alliteration.

Publication: March, 1961

REDESIGNED and completely reset, this new Shorter Edition of Modern Rhetoric presents in concentrated form the rhetoric section (Parts 1-4) of the Second Edition, omitting the handbook and the readings. It contains a full treatment of the research paper from the first steps of preparation and note-taking through the final writing and rewriting. Materials on outlining, footnotes, and bibliography (which appeared in the appendices of the Second Edition) have been woven into the chapters of Part 4. In addition, a new student theme on the topic of the Civil War has been prepared especially for this edition.

In the Shorter Edition, the number and order of chapters and the major divisions within chapters are the same as in Parts 1-4 of the Second Edition. The condensation has been achieved, in the main, by deleting certain examples and related comments, principally in chapters on description and narration, diction, metaphor, and tone; relatively little material has been deleted from chapters on exposition and argument. Thus, the emphasis in the Shorter Edition falls more heavily on expository and argumentative discourse.

Publication: April, 1961

IN THIS IMPORTANT NEW BOOK of methods, the authors, all experienced classroom teachers, set forth effective and practical ways of solving the problem which lies at the heart of the English course: integrating purpose, content, and method. They have organized the book around five basic areas: Language, Thought, and Feeling; Understanding; Appreciation; Communication; The Discovery of Values—a summary, idealistic but sound, of the task of the English course and the English teacher.

In all, there are twelve chapters, each containing two main divisions: Perspectives and The Teaching Problem. Perspectives is concerned with the content to be taught, the insights needed by the teacher, and the philosophical and psychological issues involved. The second division of each chapter covers the strategies of classroom instruction - ways of teaching, actual classroom procedures, and practical methods for testing and evaluating students' progress. The book also includes six teaching units which show how the content and methods discussed may be introduced in the classroom.

In a Prologue entitled "Teacher and Learner" the authors discuss the ideal English teacher in relation to today's students and schools, and in the four-part Epilogue, "Program and Plan," they offer practical, specific ways of

organizing lessons, units, and curricula.

Because the emphasis throughout is on the content of the English course, Teaching Language and Literature will be of interest to all who believe that a rediscovery of content is the most important task facing the teacher of Publication: May, 1961 English.

THIS EXTENSIVE COLLECTION of source materials gives the student a unique opportunity to see for himself what has happened to our language. The teaching possibilities it affords are many. The first is in freshman English, either as a sourcebook for controlled research projects or as a reader in those courses directed toward language study. In addition, instructors will find it an invaluable supplement to the History of the English Language or Introduction to Language courses.

The Gorrell and Laird sourcebook reprints some sixty selections-samples of English from Anglo-Saxon times to the present. These are primarily source materials; the student using this book will discover how language develops and changes. Some of the selections are from rare or out of print

sources not readily available elsewhere.

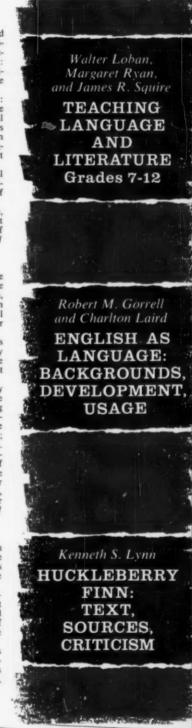
The book begins with "A Language Miscellany"-short quotations by Langer, Pirandello, Ben Jonson, Sapir, Thurber, and others that illustrate immediately the importance of language and the great variety of writing about it. There follow six main divisions, the titles of which give some indi-cation of the scope of the materials: Language As It Works; The Language As It Was; Early Observations of Language; Development of the Dictionary; Prescriptive Grammar and Usage Problems; The Modern Problem of Usage.

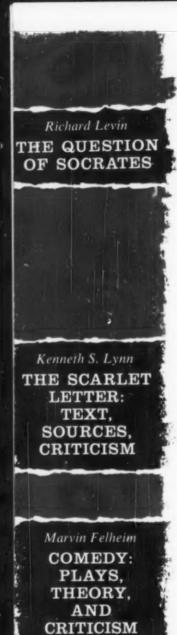
The editorial commentary contained in this sourcebook is planned to stimulate study and discussion of the major issues in language. Before each of the seven parts there is an introduction that suggests the significance of the selections to the study of the language; following each part are questions for discussion and questions that serve as springboards for investigation, reports, or brief papers. Also included, at the end of the book, are suggestions for Publication: March, 1961 longer papers.

THE COMPLETE TEXT of Mark Twain's classic novel, the significant criticism it has stimulated, and some of the typical sources from which it grew, are all contained in this new Harbrace Sourcebook. The text printed here includes the fugitive "raftsman" section of Chapter 16, omitted in most editions of the novel; this section is clearly marked off from the rest of the chapter.

In Part II are examples of the humorist tradition of the old Southwestsketches by Johnson Hooper and Richard Johnson and a relevant excerpt from Twain's Autobiography—which show how Twain used and perfected the tradition in which he grew up. In addition, there are several songs of Julia Moore, the "Sweet Singer of Michigan," whom Twain spoofs in the "Grangerford Ode."

In Part III Mr. Lynn brings together the most important critical writings about the novel: for example, the early unfavorable reviews, the appreciative essay of Twain's good friend, William Dean Howells, the contributions of such modern commentators as Van Wyck Brooks, Bernard DeVoto,





Lionel Trilling, T. S. Eliot, and Leo Marx. The final essay in the section is Mr. Lynn's study of Huck and Jim. The sourcebook concludes with suggestions for short and long research papers and for further reading.

Publication: February, 1961

THE FOCUS of this book is the trial of Socrates and the forces and events that led up to it. The editor has chosen his selections to reveal as much as possible about the character of Socrates, his method of inquiry, and his relationships to the community, rather than to present a full discussion of his philosophy. The book will thus be within the grasp of the freshman who has had no formal training in philosophy.

The heart of this sourcebook is in the accounts of the three eyewitnesses whose works have survived: Aristophanes, Plato, and Xenophon, each of whom presents a strikingly different picture of Socrates. Aristophanes' satiric comedy The Clouds is included in its entirety. A generous sampling of Plato shows various aspects of the character of Socrates and the people who became his accusers; in marked contrast are selections from the historian Xenophon. In addition, there are a number of shorter pieces from secondary sources of the Hellenistic and Roman periods which demonstrate not only the breadth of Socrates' influence but also the distortions which can occur

in the transmission of historical fact.

In his general introduction Mr. Levin discusses the historical background of Fourth Century Athens, as well as the problems of historical research. In addition, he provides an introduction to each author and, in the case of Plato, a headnote to each selection. Also included: a glossary of people, places, and things mentioned in the selections; a chronological list of events; suggestions for written assignments that progress from short topics on individual selections to longer and more complex topics; suggestions for further Publication: March, 1961 reading.

The Scarlet Letter, a standard novel in freshman English and American literature courses, is presented here in its entirety. And, to help elucidate it, Mr. Lynn also presents the items within the Hawthorne canon which can be said to prefigure the novel, as well as examples of important Hawthorne

The sources include the short story, "Endicott and the Red Cross," and entries from *The American Notebooks*. In the criticism section are such important contributions as Dr. George Loring's "Transcendentalist" celebration (1850), Orestes Brownson's attack (1850), Anthony Trollope's discussion of Hawthorne's "Genius" (1879), and Henry James' analysis of the novel (1879). To these Mr. Lynn has added several landmarks of modern criticism from D. H. Lawrence's Studies on Classic American Literature (1923), from Yvor Winters' Maule's Curse (1938), and from F.O. Matthiessen's American Renaissance (1941). Mr. Lynn concludes the book with suggestions for written assignments of varying lengths and degrees of complexity, and suggestions for further reading. Publication: February, 1961

EXAMPLES of the major forms of comedy-from Aristophanes' The Birds to works of the contemporary theater-are exemplified in this new Harbrace Sourcebook, a companion volume to Richard Levin's Tragedy: Plays, Theor. and Criticism. Mr. Felheim has chosen as models four one-act and four fulllength plays; among them are Shakespeare's Twelfth Night, Molière's The Misanthrope (Richard Wilbur's translation), Sheridan's The Critic, Wilde's The Importance of Being Earnest, Chekhov's The Wedding, and Shaw's The Man of Destiny. This proportion of long and short plays will allow instructors to make balanced assignments from the sourcebook if they choose to use it with other texts in the Introduction to Literature and World Litera-

Part II explores the nature of comedy, with theoretical discussions by Congreve, Meredith, Bergson, Freud, Dobree, Leacock, Langer, Kronenberger, and Frye; in Part III are critical essays which examine four particular The sourcebook concludes with suggestions for written assignments and for further reading. Publication: April, 1961

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When he was satisfied with his inspection, the Captain proceeded to a pronouncement.

"That Shelley fellow was a sissy! Strike the poem off the reading list."

"Aye, aye, sir!" said the Chairman of the Lit Detail.

The Captain warped his majestic hull around toward the door, but there he stopped, caught in the backwash of an afterthought.

"Belay that," he said, turning to the Chairman. "Not just that thing about beauty. Strike off everything in the book by that fellow. No Shelley. Understand?" "But, sir, —" the Chairman began.

"All of it!" the Captain shouted. "No Shelley! Won't do for Midshipmen. Can't have them exposed to that kind of bilge." He gave his falsetto a try again. "Shrieking and clasping his hands!" But he still sounded like a bosun in sick bay. "I might have known it when I saw the fellow's name on the list. Percy ——!"

"Please let us keep Ode to the West Wind, Captain," the Chairman of the Lit Detail pleaded. "In a way, sir, it's a nautical poem. That is, it's about the weather."

The Captain shook his head.

"Won't do!" he said. "That one too! All of them! After all, there's a war on. Throw them all out! Understand? Shrieking and all that bilge! Percy —! Percy Bosh, I say!"

So, that year at the United States Naval Academy, Nineteenth Century English Poetry was taught with no mention of Percy Bysshe Shelley. To quiet my conscience in the matter, I tried to believe that a whole class of officers in the U.S. Navy would be manlier than their comrades in Blue and Gold because they had never heard of him. At least, if they ever encountered Beauty and recognized it and shrieked, they would have no one to blame but themselves.

We did retain Keats in the Plebe syllabus that year, however, probably because the Captain never had the stomach for looking into The Eve of St. Agnes after he jettisoned Shelley. At the time, I was sure that if he had known what was going on in Madeline's bedroom on St. Agnes

Eve and heard the commotion it caused in my Plebe class, John Keats would have gone over the side too.

At the Naval Academy, the teaching method is somewhat different from the method practiced in most institutions of so-called higher learning. Or so it was during the war. Every Midshipman had to have a grade in the instructor's grade book for every day, and for that reason you had very little time for shilly-shallying around with superfluous things like ideas. You got each Midshipman on his feet in the course of the fifty-minute period, asked him a question that he would find it hard to answer equivocally, jotted a numerical grade in your grade book, and proceeded to the next man. According to Academy Regs, you said, "That is well," at the end of each recitation, whether all was well or not; and it was a good idea to observe this rule because, if you didn't, your Midshipman would remain standing at attention, as solemn as a ninepin, even after you had called on someone else.

When I came to The Eve of St. Agnes in the Lit syllabus, I was pleased to note that there were forty-two stanzas in the poem. There were twenty-one Plebes in my Lit class. That meant two stanzas per Plebe. At the rate of a minute per stanza, I would have eight minutes left over for teaching.

We cast off to a good start with Keats's poem. I gave the class the poop about the legend of St. Agnes Eve, made sure they had the word on the rivalry between Madeline's family and Porphyro's, ran them through a drill in pronouncing Porphyro as Porphyro and not Proffero, and together we convoyed that amorous young man through the "dusky galleries" of Madeline's castle and into Madeline's bedroom, where, as Keats put it, he "took covert, pleased amain." That phrase caused a little difficulty, but I persuaded my future officers and gentlemen that Porphyro, being himself a gentleman if not a Naval officer, only hid in a corner of Madeline's room and did not take to the covers of her sack.

Then came Madeline's turn. All innocence, but eagerness too, "St. Agnes' charméd maid" climbed the marble stairs, lighting her way with a candle, and finally hove to at the door of her room, where Porphyro was hiding.

"Then what happened?" I asked the Plebe I had brought to attention to sound

off on Stanzas 23 and 24.

The Plebe hesitated, and I thought he looked puzzled. But it was hard to tell. Most Plebes looked puzzled aboard the Bull Department.

"Well, sir," he said, finally, "when Madeline opened her bedroom door, a big

animal ran out."

I could not have been more startled if the Engineering Department (known as "Steam") had blown out a boiler under my classroom windows, as indeed they were in the habit of doing from time to

"A big what?" I said. "A big animal, sir."

I tried to think of all the things cluttering Madeline's bedroom that St. Agnes Eve. There was a table covered with cloth of woven crimson, gold, and jet. There were candied apple, quince, and plum and lucent syrops, tinct with cinnamon. And of course there was Porphyro. But I could recall no animals, large or small, on the loose in the girl's chamber.

"I think you must be mistaken," I said. "It's in the book, sir," the Plebe replied, solemnly. "May I show you?"

In the Navy, if it's in the book it's so. In my place, even the Captain would have had to give that Plebe a 4.0 for the day if he proved himself right.

"Very well," I said. "Find it in the book and read it to me."

The Plebe opened his book to Stanza 23 and read the first line.

"Out went the taper as she burried in. . . . That's a large tropical animal found mainly in South America, sir," he said. "I looked it up."

Five minutes later, Steam was sending over a man to ask us to pipe down.

The Captain never heard about this interpretation of Keats in my classroom, and at the time I was grateful. Maybe, though, it would have been all right if he had. On second thought, I believe he would have approved of Madeline's bed-room. After all, he liked animals in literature. It was only Beauty and that sort of bilge that he disapproved of.

PEDAGOGY

RAY MIZER

To teach, be thou not soporific; Be, rather, gay and tentative. Thus you avoid the pose deific That comes with being positive. Eschew pet jokes in hieroglyphic, Forgive the too inquisitive, And you escape the crown ossific, Or the dank niche dessicative.

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Round Table

THE CRAVEN COMITATUS

MURRAY F. MARKLAND

The scholars who write about the epic or heroic tradition of the Germanic peoples nearly always discuss the comitatus, the select group of the hero's retainers, those warriors bound voluntarily and personally to his service by virtues which modern men still respect and aspire to. And our admiration brings us to describe the relationship always in such words as these used by George Anderson, ". . . a whole-souled devotion to which the Anglo-Saxon was ready to dedicate his life. 'Death is better for every earl than a life of shame!" Historical sources and the heroic poems are called upon to justify assertions like this, "Whatever the outcome of the fight, however, victory and life or defeat and death, undoubtedly the relations of the war-leader to his comitatus is one of the most important themes in Old English literature."5

The comitatus, its loyalty, courage, and disinterest, is thus made a nucleus of our conception of the Germanic heroic tradition. This is done despite the fact that in Beowulf, the major literary production of the tradition, the comitatus fails its leader. The Beowulf must then be a denial of the customs for which it is often cited as evidence; or there must be a reason and explanation internal to the poem for the failure of all but one of Beowulf's men to show the courage demanded of them, for

their failure to support him, and for their reluctance to die in his defence.

Even though the hero and his comitatus stand in the forefront of their picture of the heroic age, not many writers have attempted to account for the defection of Beowulf's chosen arms-companions. W. W. Lawrence, who felt that the attribution of cowardice to Beowulf's thanes was most striking, perceived two possible explanations: the poet either introduced it into the tale or he got it from an older story. I assume that by the first he means that the poet introduced it with some purpose, although Mr. Lawrence finds its only effect is to enhance the hero by contrast. However, he favors the second possibility on the grounds that it is more in accord with the poet's usual practice. After raising and leaving unanswered a number of questions (for example, 'What explains its place in the story?1), Lawrence turns away from his problem by saying, "The constantly shifting motivation of epic tradition is hard to follow." R. W. Chambers also says that the concept came to the poet from earlier stories or from earlier versions of this particular story. The motifs of Beowulf are both folklore and heroic, matters which are often incongruous if not incompatible. By comparing details of Beowulf with its folklore analogues, Chambers is able to explain to his satisfaction a number of these incongruities. When he turns to the craven comitatus he accounts for it in the same way, "The hero is in each case [the analogous stories about the son of the Bear] deserted by his companions: a feature which, while it is marked in the Grettis Saga, can obviously be allowed to survive in Beowulf only in a much softened form. The chosen retainers whom Beowulf has taken with him on his journey could not be represented

Anderson, p. 95.

^{&#}x27;George K. Anderson, The Literature of the Anglo-Saxons (Princeton, 1949), p. 64; R. W. Chambers, Beowulf (Cambridge, 1959), pp. 28, 327-328; C. L. Wren, Beowulf (London, 1953), p. 74.

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W. W. Lawrence, Beowulf and Epic Tradition (Cambridge, 1928), p. 227.

as unfaithful, because the poet is saving the episode of the faithless retainers for the death of Beowulf. To have twice represented the escort as cowardly would have made the poem a satire upon the comitatus and would have assured it a hostile reception in every hall from Canterbury to Edinburgh."4

I feel, as do others, that Beowulf is a unified poem, that the poet was an artist who had full control of the major aspects of his poem.⁸ It had to be, therefore, the poet's decision that Beowulf's comitatus should fail him, and it has to be that that stailure in some way adds meaning to the

poem.

Mr. Chamber's attempted explanation isself shows how selective and purposeful the poet is. If he got the motif of the antrustworthy companions from its analogues, he has changed it greatly, because in those stories the defection always occurs when the hero is underground and it occurs because the companions are faithless and self-seeking. In Beowulf the defection results from cowardice caused by a fully apparent aboveground danger. Beowulf's companions are not evil or ignoble, they are fearful. These circumstances are sufficiently different to show a deliberate decision by the poet.

Is it not possible, also, that the source is not folk-lore, but real events of which the poet knew? Certainly, this ideal of heroic behavior must, like the ideal of chivalry, have been violated by the cowardly, and the members of some real comitatus must at some time have run like rabbits. If this were so, we would again have evidence that the poet was choosing deliberately in accord with his purpose.

As he describes the actions of the comitatus in each of the three adventures,

the poet creates a pattern compatible with other aspects of the story. Despite the fact that the three main adventures are folklore matter rather than heroic matter (that is, they are essentially adventures more suitable to the single hero than to a group), the comitatus does participate in all three, and not until the last is there the slightest implication that they are unworthy. They participate bravely though futilely in the fight with Grendel. The same men are excluded from the fight with Grendel's dam, but they do not defect. They remain, waiting and hoping, even after all have decided Beowulf is dead and Hrothgar and the Scyldings have returned to Heorot. The comitatus does not descend with Beowulf, but it does not desert its post aboveground. Beowulf's men are there to hail him when he swims to shore bearing Grendel's head. It is in the third battle, some fifty years later, that Beowulf's chosen warriors fail him. One should be aware that this comitatus would not be made up of the same individuals as was the one that accompanied him to Heorot. The one we know, Wiglaf, is a youngster; the others must also be newer men, of another generation than Beowulf; and of the new men only one has the courage, loyalty, and devotion which each and every man of the first comitatus had.

The contrast of then and now permeates the poem. Beowulf is a poem of ultimate defeat. Beowulf is defeated, as are all men, despite his prowess and earlier victories, and Beowulf's people, after him, are also defeated. One may see the poem as Tolkien does as "a balance, an opposition of ends and beginnings. In its simplest terms it is a contrasted description of two moments in a great life, rising and setting; an elaboration of the ancient and intensely moving contrast between youth and old age, first achievement and final death." Or one may see its meaning extended far beyond the individual as Brodeur does, "It is more than the death of Beowulf which constitutes the tragedy of Part II, and so of the whole work; in death he is victorious; and he is old enough and sufficiently full of honors, to die happily. His tragedy is that he dies in vain-indeed that his death brings in its train the overthrow of his people."

'Chambers, p. 380.

[&]quot;Arthur E. Dubois, "The Unity of Beowulf," PMLA, XLIX (1934), 374-405; J. R. R. Tolkien, "Beowulf: The Monsters and the Critics," Proc. Brit. Acad., XXII (1936), 271-272; Adrien Bonjour, The Digressions in Beowulf, Medium Aevum Monographs V, Oxford 1950; Arthur G. Brodeur, The Art of Beowulf, (Berkeley, 1959).

In either or both of these statements is an understanding which enables us to explain why the poet had the comitatus fail Beowulf. There have been changes, not only in Beowulf, but in his people and in his society. Beowulf has grown old, so his powers have declined. His people have declined, this the poem tells us, until they are dependent upon a single hero to save them from conquest, but the hero himself is dependent upon a support from his people which he does not receive. The old order has passed away taking with it the virtues which Beowulf still has, which Wiglaf apparently has, but which no one else of the group about Beowulf has, and which, by implication, few of the rest of the Geats have.

The failure of the comitatus informs us that although Wiglaf, whom Beowulf invests with his authority, is a hero of the same order as Beowulf, the people are doomed to subjection under a foreign power. A people who have been heroes led by heroes is exhausted. The poet has foreshadowed in several digressions the destruction of these people, and by the defection of the comitatus he accounts for the catastrophe.

Bonjour, p. 69.

THE DRAMATIC RHYTHM OF THE WAKEFIELD CRUCIFIXION

CHARLES THOMAS SAMUELS

There are some serious omissions in the critical canon of important medieval drama. Among neglected masterpieces of the genre is the Wakefield Crucifixion, a play notable for a periodic alteration and combination of emotional motifs so artful as to distinguish it from most of the English mysteries. Though the play's subject is inherently powerful, its dramaturgy is itself striking.

The Wakefield Crucifixion begins with a boastful speech by Pilate which is followed by the entrance of Christ's Torturers. The Torturers speak of Christ as a "fals chuffer" in significant ignorance of the fact that the only boaster present is not Christ but Pilate. To a Christian audience, the discrepancy between the Torturers' derision of Christ and His true character is both unmistakable and portentous. The periodical dramatization of this discrepancy gives the play its rhythm.

The drama's first movement depicts the long and horrifying process of nailing Christ to the cross. Throughout the scene the Torturers continue to taunt the silent sufferer with what they "know" to be the

falsity of His claims. They accuse Him of pride and each of them expresses an explicit desire to bring Christ down to his own level. They even accompany their physical torment with imaginative psychological goading, for they tell Jesus that in fastening Him securely to the cross they are enabling Him to prove Himself king of the Jews; they are preparing Christ to defend His claims in a tournament in which the cross shall bear Him.

The torture is both elaborate and long. Christ's response to it is tactfully delayed. After what has seemed an eternity of pain, Christ responds to His tormenters with an innocence that takes on added poignancy in proportion to the depth and duration of their misguided conceit:

My folk, what have I done to the, That thou all thus shall tormente me? Thy syn by I full sore. what have I greuyd the? (p. 265)¹

As events move to their inevitable and awful conclusion, the playwright portrays many of the biblical details of the Passion: the offering of the sour draught, the

The author, a teaching assistant at the University of California, will be an instructor at Williams College next fall.

^{&#}x27;All quotes from "The Crucifixion," The Towneley Plays, ed. George England (London, 1897).

sharing of Christ's clothes, Pilate's plaque, etc. But the playwright also includes some "business" which is not in the Bible, clearly, to re-emphasize the irony at the center of the play. The Torturers are not all literate, and there is a short comic interchange in which we learn that only one of them can read the plaque upon which Pilate has written. Again we note their acknowledged error, for the first Torturer deprecates the writing rather than admit he cannot read it.

Then the dramatist suggests a slight change in the minds of the tormenters. Perhaps they are ruffled by Pilate's strange refusal to erase the plaque upon which he has written that Jesus is the Jewish king. At any rate, to their taunts to Christ that if He be king He save Himself, they add the challenge, or invitation?, that if He be king He save them. They challenge Him to persuade them of His divinity. They, unknowingly, invite conversion! At this point, Christ dies.

The play's conflict between human brutality and ignorance and divine gentleness and wisdom seems to be ending with a human death for divinity. The qualification of this seeming conclusion is the play's real climax. Its form is a simultaneous statement of the two main dramatic motifs.

The tragic ignorance of the Torturers has been relentlessly exposed by means of a series of ironic juxtapositions culminating in the slight wavering before Christ's death. After Christ's death, to determine whether their work is done, the tormenters force a blind man to pierce the Lord's body with a spear. The blind man does so and a miracle occurs; his sight is

restored. At this moment when the tormenters may logically achieve the conversion they had unconsciously invited, and the false human victory over Christ may be subsumed within Christ's divine victory over sinful man, the fourth Torturer says:

> he felys no more payn; ffor hely ne for none othere man All the good tha euer he wan Gettys not his lyfe agayn. (p. 277)

In this speech the ignorance of the tormenter and the truth of the martyr come together, but the latter makes the merest impression on the former. The psychological insight in exemplary. The Torturer cannot suddenly be enlightened; that would be the sort of last act conversion which is no more honorable for all its popularity among playwrights. He cannot be enlightened; nevertheless, the supreme truth must show some ascendancy. The attenuated, exquisitely poised sympathy of the Torturer's last speech dramatizes all the ascendancy that Christian truth can have over the hopelessly damned. The Torturer cannot recognize his Saviour, but in his damnation he can look back with human fondness on a divinity he cannot comprehend. Neither of the play's two main motifs is cancelled. They are drawn out to the end, but at the end, with restraint and propriety, the stronger motif shows its greater value. For its simple but unerring construction and its dignified praise of the power of Christ even over the hearts of disbelievers, the Wakefield Crucifixion merits our attention.

VICTORIAN LITERATURE AS IT APPEARS TO CONTEMPORARY STUDENTS

ROBERT C. SLACK

Last spring the students in our senior seminar for English majors were reading

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Browning's The Ring and the Book, a poem and story celebrated among Victorian works for its vigor, for its superb character drawing, and for its penetrating moral insight. The ultimate response of the students was not gratifying, particularly that of the best students, who had a good grasp of

what Browning's poem was saying. Not only did they doubt the psychological genuineness of Caponsacchi's chivalry, but also they hesitated to share Browning's admiration for such conduct as being saintly. Essentially they were saying: "We doubt the reality of Caponsacchi and Pompilia. And even if they were that way, we don't see why they should have been." They were questioning not only Browning's portrayal of an ideal, but the validity of the ideal itself. Moreover they did not fully share Browning's righteous joy in punishing the scoundrelly Guido.

This is only the reaction of a few students to one Victorian poem, and by itself the instance means little. But I suspect this instance is not by itself. It is one more illustration of an attitude toward Victorian literature that seems to be fairly common among contemporary students, and especially among able undergraduates who are genuinely devoted to literature. Such students come to a ready acknowledgment of the living power of twentiethcentury writers such as Joyce and T. S. Eliot, Proust and Kafka, Faulkner and Hemingway. Of course, these are the voices of their own world and are bound to sound louder to them than do the Victorians. Yet this is so not only because the moderns are closer in time, but even more because the moderns are radically different in idiom and character. Too often Victorian literature tires our able students because they find it too prolix; it bores them because they find it too obvious; it antagonizes them because they find it too staunchly didactic.

I have not conducted a door-to-door public opinion survey on this subject, but many of my colleagues whose judgment on literary matters I highly respect confirm this observation. And I have met with the same story in other universities. Only a few weeks ago I had the opportunity to speak informally with a well-known scholar and teacher of Victorian literature, who, in frank conversation, admitted the justice of this position. "The Victorian novelists," he said, "still do attract a body of students. But the poets do not attract them, and the Victorian writers of expository prose repel them." My observation is

not new; it is a reluctant recognition by one person concerned for the welfare of Victorian literature that, in the eyes of contemporary students, it is not faring too well today.

Certain tenets of the New Criticism are now in the very intellectual atmosphere that our most brilliant students breathe. This criticism places great emphasis upon the qualities of ambiguity and irony in poetry: the poem should not be so singleintentioned as to make a direct statement about the experience it records; it should represent an experience dramatically, in concrete or metaphoric terms, so that the myriad suggestions of meaning which cling to the actual experience will be adequately suggested by its poetic representation. For those who fully accept this New Criticism doctrine, we must admit that Victorian poetry is at a disadvantage.

Let's consider a specific example. In Tennyson's Maud appears a passage which is so close in phrasing to portions of T. S. Eliot's Prufrock that comparison between the two is invited. Tennyson's protagonist, after killing the brother of his beloved Maud, has fled to France. News has come to him that Maud has died. He is distracted with grief; her image, or shadow, haunts both his dreams and his daylight hours. One morning after dreaming of her, he wakes to find the haunting phantom still before him. Outside his little room he sees that

. . . the yellow vapors choke The great city sounding wide; The day comes, a dull red ball Wrapt in drifts of lurid smoke On the misty river-tide.

He goes wandering through the city, seeing before him the accusing shadow of his beloved:

. . . the broad light glares and beats
And the shadow flits and fleets
And will not let me be;
And I loathe the squares and streets,
And the faces that one meets,
Hearts with no love for me.
Always I long to creep
Into some still cavern deep,
There to weep, and weep, and weep
My whole soul out to thee. (Part II, lines
203-07; 229-38)

How remarkably similar some lines of Mr. Eliot's Prufrock sound! For Prufrock is proceeding through the streets aware of

The yellow fog that rubs its back upon the window-panes,

. . . the yellow smoke that slides along the street. . .

And he is concerned about preparing "a face to meet the faces that you meet," faces of those who have no love for him but will set him "pinned and wriggling on the wall." Prufrock, too, echoes the consoling "cavern deep" with his vision of lingering "in the chambers of the sea."

At times the modern poet seems almost a verbal echo of the Victorian; yet the two are really worlds apart. There is nothing subtle about the situation in which Tennyson's protagonist moves. The cause of his distraction is obvious. But Prufrock is nervous for much more complicated reasons: he is repelled by, attracted by, frightened by the trivial-minded but sharptongued women of his social world. He is tempted to make a love declaration that will shake the very foundations of this world of coffee-spoons; yet he never voices his revelation because he trembles delicately at the possibility of being misunderstood and of meeting a casual rebuff. His deep restlessness is the unidentifiable malaise of being alive, or rather half-alive, in the modern world. His nervousness arises from such vastly complicated and subtle causes that any one of them disappears when we try to examine it carefully.

And consider the relationship to an accepted code of morality that these two protagonists reflect. Tennyson's protagonist has the curse of Cain upon him for the murder of one we may well call a brother. Prufrock has done nothing wrong -unless it is wrong to grow old rather timidly, in an uneventful life. There seems no moral code assignable to Prufrock's world or life (though there is a sense of moral outrage that he does not, cannot, act). For Tennyson's protagonist the distinction between right and wrong is much more clear and simple, and he is in an instantly apprehended relationship with this moral code. For Prufrock the whole situation is much more nebulous: if he experiences a sense of guilt, he doesn't know

what he is guilty of, unless it be the guilt of not breaking some generally acknowledged moral commandment. Surely in this respect the Victorian poem is much simpler, much more direct.

When we consider the imagery, we find a similar story. Even when the images are verbally almost identical, the modern poet has used his with more subtlety and complexity. Tennyson writes

the yellow vapors choke
The great city sounding wide . . .

This is a descriptive detail. The smoky, choking yellow fog hangs in the city: this is the fact, and the image brings the fact concretely to us. In *Prufrock* we have

. . . the yellow fog that rubs it back upon the window-panes.

Mr. Eliot gives us the fact of the fog, but he does something else with it, too; it contains as well a cat-sense about it and is in some way bound up with the purring women at the tea party to which Prufrock is going. The image serves more than one function: it is representational and symbolic at the same time.

Or consider Tennyson's lines

. . . I loathe the squares and streets, And the faces that one meets, Hearts with no love for me.

The protagonist, his nervous system almost unhinged by his present situation, hates everything his eyes fall upon—the squares and streets and the faces of every stranger passerby. The lines constitute a direct statement of the immediate emotional condition of the protagonist. However, in Mr. Eliot's poem, the phrase appears in this context:

There will be time, there will be time To prepare a face to meet the faces that you meet. . .

This is considerably more tenuous. Prufrock fearfully anticipates the ordeal of entering the society of the sharp-eyed and sharp-tongued women. He isn't there yet, and there is still time to avoid the encounter. Yet among that society is where the overwhelming question must be voiced, if at all. Much of Prufrock's hesitance before contact with real and vital experience is in this line; he would rather turn back and flee. The phrase, though it consists of almost the identical words, is considerably richer in implication as it is used by the modern poet. Now, what is a reader who has learned to relish such complexity and subtlety (as many of our most able students have) going to think of the far less complicated lucidity of the Victorian poem?

I do not wish to minimize the virtues of the Victorian poem. Its dramatic situation is more direct and more intense in nature, its moral emphasis is not evaporated into clouds of ambiguity, its emotional impact is not slowed up by irony, and it is clear and immediately apprehendable by the reader. I am not trying to say that these qualities of the Tennyson poem are defects. My only contention is that many of our most competent students, nurtured by disciples of the New Criticism and living in a world that questions or denies so many of the Victorian moral assumptions, have learned to relish complexity and subtlety, ambiguity and wit, to the point that Victorian poetry in general no longer strikes fire with them. They have learned to enjoy puzzle-solving as a delightful adjunct to arriving at the relevance of an obscure allusion or the application of an oblique image; whereas Victorian literature, aimed much more directly at communication, simply has very few of such puzzles to solve.

Some apologists for Victorian literature have tried to make it viable in our times by demonstrating that the major writers were, most of them, in serious rebellion against all that we think of as "Victorianism"; that underneath the pious assertions they were as filled with doubts and uncertainties, that they were as much aware of living in a shifting quicksand of a world, socially, politically, morally, as any twentieth-century writer is. Although there is some truth to this contention, it does not make the attractions of Victorian literature the same as the attractions of modern literature. The approach to these concerns, the manner of presenting them, has changed in certain fundamental ways. Whereas the Victorians made a frontal attack, modern writing makes an oblique approach (some might say that it makes a devious retreat from its concerns). And the assumptions upon which the Victorians were basing their frontal attack really differ from the assumptions which underlie the modern work. The Victorians, in spite of all their doubts, could not escape from an inner instinct that all would eventually work out for the best. Our age has lost this instinct.

The problem of making Victorian literature viable to contemporary students, it seems to me, is not going to be solved by suggesting that the Victorians really are moderns. Perhaps we could make greater progress by kindling a new interest in the genuine manner in which this literature is written. Many of us are convinced that it does have a full flood of vitality; we know that it once showed the capacity to stir its readers deeply. What were the original springs of that vital power? Can we tap them again so that contemporary students and readers will respond once more to the genuine non-temporal force of the floodtide of Victorian literature? I sincerely hope so.

THE TEACHING OF VICTORIAN LITERATURE

FRANCIS G. TOWNSEND

The cultural barriers which separate the twentieth-century student from Victorian literature are formidable. Nevertheless, I think it is true that except in the days of Elizabeth, and then in the case of the drama only, English literature has never been such a popular art form as it was in the days of Victoria. And because Elizabethan drama and Victorian literature were popular art forms at one time, even to this day they retain the ability to attract the populace, once initial cultural prejudices are dispelled.

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If it is popularity we want, we can have it easily. What poet appeals more to the average student than Robert Browning? What novels hold more immediate attraction than Wuthering Heights, Jane Eyre, David Copperfield, and Tess of the D'Urbervilles? Unfortunately the disconnected study of isolated works is no substitute for a course in Victorian literature, any more

than a parade is a campaign.

Victorian literature, like all popular literature, uses ideas which are in the air, but when the wind changes, the atmosphere of a past time vanishes, and it requires remarkable science to reconstitute it. Yet reconstitute it we must, because no student can come to a proper understanding of Victorian poetry and fiction unless he is at least aware of the main intellectual concerns of the age. The worst mistake we can make is to attempt this reconstitution of the atmosphere in our own twentieth-century words. We become amateur philosophers, expounding Kant and the way that German idealism appears transmuted in even the minor poets of nineteenth century. We become amateur theologians-very amateur indeed -as we explain religious doubt and the grounds therefor. We become amateur economists explaining the long superseded systems of Smith, Malthus, Ricardo, and John Stuart Mill. Many of us have become semi-qualified experts on economic theory, but only economic theory as of 1860.

We should let the Victorians speak for themselves, through the medium of that unique product of the age, the grand essay. Personally, I find the grand essay a highly satisfying literary form. Nothing so exposes the shallowness of the twentieth century and a good deal of what ails it as a comparison of the best issue of the Atlantic Monthly produced in the last generation with the worst issue of the Edinburgh Review in its heyday. But we must never forget that the grand essayists are for mature students, not for undergraduates, who find them not just incomprehensible, but, what is worse, boring. The question is, how can we employ them without killing student interest? But that question is inseparable from another, namely, how can we build an undergraduate course in Victorian literature which will achieve popularity without sacrificing substance?

First of all, let us avoid the natural tendency of English departments to pirouette in ever widening circles around the sophomore survey, introducing juniors and seniors successively to less and less important writers; let us concentrate on poetry. Let us exclude minor poets, in order to secure greater concentration on a few representative poets. For my part, I like to be even more exclusive: if a department already offers a Browning course, there seems little reason to devote several hours to him in another course. Thus Tennyson and Arnold can receive the attention they deserve. In the same way, if a course in the novel is available, then in the Victorian literature course fiction can be held to a minimum. Now, how shall we use the grand essayists?

I have found the following technique fairly effective. Begin the semester by having the students read selections from Macaulay, Carlyle, John Stuart Mill, and Newman, saving Ruskin, Arnold, and Pater for the moment. Do not try to demonstrate the literary value of these writers. Use them frankly to establish the intellectual milieu in which Victorian poetry was created. Do not try to defend Victorian ideology. Concede that it is dead, but insist that it is as important for literary study as concepts of more remote centuries. Spend no more than an hour on Macaulay and another on John Stuart Mill, two on Carlyle and two on Newman, concentrating on the intellectual issues in their work, avoiding biographical bypaths and special pleading. The superior student, as you might expect, discovers without being taught that these essays are more than journalism, while even the average student will find them mildly interesting if he is assured that he need not admire them. And at the end of two weeks the class will have had at least a glimpse of the main stream of thought.

After this brief introduction of not more than six hours class time, I suggest spending another six hours on the poetry of Clough and Matthew Arnold, with little more than an hour for Clough, and that hour confined to standard pieces, which have their own appeal, such as "The Latest Decalogue" and "Say Not the Struggle Naught Availeth." In the meantime, the class should be reading David Copperfield, to which three hours of classroom discussion will be allotted after the conclusion of the Arnold-Clough section, those three hours being carefully directed to the specifically Victorian elements of David Copperfield. It is precisely because David Copperfield is so rich in these elements that I would select it over any other Dickens novel. It is full of the sights and sounds, the thoughts and words, the confused idealism and unconscious cruelty of the age. Of course, in this day and age there will be members of any class in Victorian literature who will be intent on a critical analysis of the faults of David Copperfield. I suggest a little one-upmanship. Concede at the outset that the novel has enormous defects and casually observe that these are clear to everyone. Treat the novel as a good story which is also an important social document. It will make its own way, because it happens to be a major work of art.

We are now at the end of the fifth week of our theoretical course. A good deal has been accomplished. The students know something of the valiant individualism, the uncompromising honesty, of Victorian thought at its best. They have at least a passing acquaintance with the main intellectual issues of the age. They have seen the doubts and difficulties occasioned by those issues in the questioning poetry of Clough and Arnold. They have been given a panoramic view of everyday Victorian life by David Copperfield. Now is the time to turn to Tennyson, the selfappointed and universally acknowledged spokesman of the age.

Here the whole course will stand or fall, and it is easy to make it stand, because average college students will like Tennyson if they are not overwhelmed by the adverse reaction of the superior students, who have been conditioned to dislike Tennyson by the criticism of the early twentieth century. The whole strategy I have been recommending is based on the simple rhetorical principle of conceding

all your opponents' strictures at the outset, by this expedient directing the students' entire attention toward finding the merits, rather than the defects, of Victorian literature, thus forcing them to adopt a positive approach. I would suggest the same policy in teaching Tennyson. At the outset fire both barrels at him: in one hour of concentrated defamation sum up everything that has been said against him. But end that hour on a tantalizing note. Of all important English poets of the last century and a quarter, Tennyson was the only one who could sell out an issue of a popular magazine with a few stanzas, who could produce best sellers one after the other, who could make a fortune out of poetry alone-no touring the lecture circuit, no hitting the academic sawdust trail, just writing poetry good enough to impress T. S. Eliot. Certainly, if one yearns to write more than closet lyrics, one can learn something by observing Tennyson's technique. And here the great mass of average students are the teacher's allies. In the next few days, if the superior students are really open-minded, they can hardly fail to observe two things: first, Tennyson's poetry does have popular appeal; second, Tennyson's poetry, in spite of its manifest defects, does have permanent value.

A paradox, a most ingenious paradox, Tennyson found success precisely where the modern critic finds failure, that is, in the expository passages which explain his meaning to the prosaic reader. Even in a poem as devoid of preaching as "Tithonus" he carefully inserts these lines:

Why should a man desire in any way To very from the kindly race of men, Or pass beyond the goal of ordinance Where all should pause, as is most meet for all?

Of course, our contemporary purists object to prose passages like this and hold out for undiluted poetry. Let me ask a series of questions: How long has it been since any human being was able to read The Waste Land as pure poetry? In the last generation it has prompted more exegesis than the Book of Daniel. Can anyone really say that he reads The Waste Land without this huge mass of interpretation coloring his impressions? Tennyson, like

most Victorian poets, took the trouble to establish his own context. Frequently he was daring enough to state his conviction in the form of a proposition. If later poets refrained from doing so, what was their motive? It could have been artistic integrity, but then again, it could have been the urge to flee from individual responsibility, which is so marked a tendency of our times.

To return to our course in Victorian literature, four weeks on Tennyson's poetry will give the student at least a rudimentary picture of the problem of writing poetry in the nineteenth century. Since he is now ready to see what Arnold's criticism is about, devote the tenth and eleventh weeks to that subject. In the last four weeks to the course, trace the erosion of the Victorian ideal. An hour's discussion of John Ruskin serves as a preface to Pre-Rapha-

elitism and the poetry of Dante Gabriel Rossetti and William Morris. A careful reading of the Conclusion to Pater's Studies in the History of the Renaissance leads naturally to the study of Swinburne and Fitzgerald. I suggest a final week of complete relaxation, Wilde's The Importance of Being Earnest and a little Gilbert and Sullivan. If a teacher feels that more fiction is needed, then the choice is obvious: Samuel Butler's The Way of All Flesh.

The course which I have outlined is certainly not devoid of substance. Had we but world enough and time, we could make it more profound, but for fifteen weeks it will suffice. Taught energetically, it can be popular. And it can do something which needs doing. It can shake the superior student loose from a blind conformity with the critical dogmas of his own age.

THE ENGLISH MAJOR AND LIBERAL EDUCATION

W. N. FRANCIS

I suppose that there are two principal reasons given for the nearly universal practice of requiring American college students to concentrate or major in some limited field of study. The first, which may be called the theoretical or liberal reason, is that every educated person must, to some extent, be an expert or at least a specialist in one field or another if he is to escape the charge of dilettantism. The other, the practical reason, is that various kinds of careers require people with rather extensive special knowledge of the kind that can be gained by devoting about one-third to one-fourth of the normal fouryear undergraduate course to a single area of study. The first reason emphasizes the fact that the breadth of view and knowledge characteristic of liberal education must be matched by knowledge in depth, by immersion in a subject-not, certainly, to

the point of saturation, but at least to the point where the modes of thought, the allusions, the specialized vocabulary, and all the other characteristics of the specialist become familiar enough to be handled with at least a sophomoric sense of expertise. The second reason emphasizes the fact that many careers open to the college graduate demand more than a beginner's knowledge of one of the academic disciplines. In brief, and to be blunt about it, the first reason is concerned with liberal education, the second with vocational education. The fact that these two reasons are advanced to justify the institution of the major is sufficient evidence that this is one of the battle grounds in the conflict between liberal education and vocationalism in our day.

Since I have introduced these loaded terms, a bit of definition is in order. By liberal education I mean that process which produces what we, as educated people, instinctively call an educated man. Such a person is marked by breadth and catholicity of knowledge, by a grasp of ideas as well as facts, by orderliness and openness of

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mind, and by clarity, precision, and grace of expression. The undergraduate liberal arts college is by no means the only place where such qualities can be acquired, but it is the only one expressly devoted to their inculcation. In spite of the massive obstacles which the typical college puts in the way, it is probably the easiest place to acquire these qualities. And a fair percentage—I will not venture a more specific estimate—of the graduates of liberal arts colleges do actually acquire them.

By vocational education, on the other hand, I mean that process that trains a person for successful participation in a specific occupation-any occupation, from garbage collector to Supreme Court justice. It is thus the principal concern of the medical school and the law school, as well as the engineering school, the business college, the secretarial school, the technical institute, and countless other institutions, including the extensive training programs of business and industrial firms. In a society as multiform and complicated as ours, this kind of training is, of course, absolutely indispensable. Without it our whole civilization would collapse into chaos. The claims of vocational education are obvious, pressing, and irrefutable. Whether or not the liberal arts college openly sets vocational training among its expressed goals, it cannot escape, avoid, or overlook these claims. However much it may emphasize preparation for life, it also engages in preparation for making a living. I doubt that it could continue to exist if it did not.

These two goals, liberal education and vocational preparation, are in conflict. However much the conflict may be played down in the interest of presenting a consistent educational philosophy, the fact remains that they are basically irreconcilable. Vocational training concerns itself with all sorts of skills, techniques, and procedures which liberal education finds intellectually trivial and stultifying. Liberal education is engaged in all kinds of speculation, theorizing, and imaginative flights which vocational training finds distracting, irrelevant, and time-wasting. Since they cannot be brought into harmony by mutual reconcilement, their conflict can be adjusted or minimized only by compromise, which is

the typical solution to which the liberal arts college resorts. One mode of compromise-perhaps the most common-is to pursue the aims of liberal education by means of general requirements, sometimes called distributional, which assure that every student is exposed to a selection of courses from various fields of study, while meeting the demands of vocationalism in a program of concentration. Certainly some majors are more involved in vocational preparation than others are. In my college, as, I suspect, in most, the department of chemistry measures its success by the number of its majors who go on to graduate study in reputable universities. Since graduate study in chemistry has, so far as I know, the single aim of training chemists, it is clear that the chemistry major is almost completely vocational. Some of our chemists deny this, principally, I am convinced, on emotional grounds-they feel that "vocational" is somehow a dirty word. But in the rough and tumble of academic discussion and dispute, they talk of "producing chemists" rather than of educating men. Similarly, almost all of our biology majors are pre-medical students, whose major concern is to gain admittance to a medical school where they can continue their preparation for a career in medicine. Majors in accounting and business administration all look forward to going into business, where their undergraduate training will be, they hope, directly applicable. To the prospective teacher, any major is to a considerable degree vocational; it is one of the paradoxes of our profession as English teachers that however much we were led by love of literature to enter into it, we are seldom able to enjoy a work of literature for its own sake, without bothering ourselves about what we would say about it to a class of students. But in spite of all this, there remains a group of undergraduate majors which are predominantly liberal rather than vocational-history, philosophy, the languages, certain of the social sciences, and English. For the last half century or so, since the decline from pre-eminence of the classics, English has been the most popular of these. In many places it still is.

The presence of many vocationally oriented majors in the undergraduate curriculum, with their conspicuous and irrefutable claims to practicality, relevance, and freedom from speculative wool-gathering and imaginative nonsense, tends to increase the questionings and doubts which our society already strongly fosters about the validity of the liberal arts. The conflict between liberal education and vocationalism often becomes most acute in the minds and families of our students. Those who come to us with some idea of what liberal education is all about, or who acquire these notions in their first year or so of college, are often strongly attracted to English. Often they come to it after trying and failing, or simply coming to dislike beyond tolerance, one of the more vocational fields. I can think of many students who have come to me with the attitude, sometimes openly expressed, "Thank God I flunked organic chemistry; now I can shift from pre-med to what I really want to domajor in English!" I must say I accept these second-hand English majors with some misgivings. Some turn out to be truly saved souls who have seen the light and followed it; others, having been shipwrecked once, are looking for a snug harbor of refuge, and often are shocked and bewildered when it turns out to be a voyage of exploration in turbulent waters.

Whatever the reason that brings them to an English major, students are often troubled in conscience about it. So strong is the vocational pressure from many sources that all but the most dedicated must make some gesture in that direction. To occupy himself in four years of expensive education without an obvious practical goal seems self-indulgent and extravagant to the student himself, and often outrageously so to his parents, who are paying part or all of the cost. The result is that the English major strives to find the very reconcilement between liberal education and vocationalism which I have just stated to be impossible. Or, if he himself realizes that the reconcilement is impossible, he seeks some rationalization to offer the home folks. Many times I have been faced with the question, "I know why I want to major in English, but what can I tell my father?

He wants to know what an English major is good for."

One is tempted to answer bluntly and unequivocally: "Tell him you came to a liberal arts college to get a liberal education, and the English major offers the best opportunity for that you can now see. Tell him that to use your four years of college for vocational training would be to waste the best-perhaps the only-opportunity you will ever have to become educated. Tell him it will be time enough to train yourself for an occupation when you know what that occupation is to be; chances are somebody will pay you even while training you."

Actually, of course, we seldom lay it on the line in quite that honest a way. Instead we say, "Tell him English is excellent background for law school—all the law school deans say so. Tell him many business leaders majored in English, and that while the middle ranks of business and industry are filled by business majors, the top men are mostly liberally educated. Tell him there are many careers—journalism, publishing, radio and television, the theatre, advertising—for which the English major is good preparation." In short, we try to make out that the English major is vocational after all.

This is, of course, rank hypocrisy. But it is hypocrisy in a good cause. It is a kind of conspiracy between the student and the teacher against the too narrow view of the parent. In helping the student out with rationalizations for his choice, we are aiding him in his effort to get out from under parental domination without open revolt. Most of us, I hope, know better than to accept these rationalizations at face value, though most of them are at least half true. We know that the academic study of literature does not turn the clumsy and inarticulate into skillful writers of advertising copy or legal briefs. We know that it does not make the shy and introverted into efficient, clear-headed personnel managers. We know, indeed, that it may work quite the other way; it may be unsettling to the point of disaster. The notable broadening effects of literary study may result in vacillation, uncertainty, and soul-searching. They may shatter the comfortable world

of middle-class security and incapacitate the student for a previously planned career. I could document these dramatic assertions many times over. I think particularly of one lad of no great scholarly or literary ability, who was slated to go into a prosperous family business. After graduating as an English major he insisted on continuing to an M.A. although we would not recommend him to graduate school with any enthusiasm, and in spite of the fact that his decision brought him into bitter conflict with his father, who saw all his hopes for a cherished only son being dissipated. Of course one factor here was the student's own failure to treat his English major as part of a liberal education; instead of going ahead to be a successful and educated clothing merchant, he could think only of turning his English major to vocational account. But it was the English major that derailed him from an otherwise straight and well-laid track.

Of course, the English major, like a vaccination, doesn't always take with such violence. The C-student usually gets by without really being reached at the core of his being. He learns his lesson, passes his comprehensive examination, and puts away or sells his books as he embarks upon what society considers the serious things of life, basically unaltered by his contact with the best that has been thought and said. I remember a reunion after twenty years with one of my own schoolmates, who in the interim had taken over and successfully managed a family manufacturing business. Politely making conversation with the English professor, he said that he remembered a course in Shakespeare as the best course he had in college. Admittedly with some malice, I asked him if he still read Shakespeare frequently. I got what I expected-he certainly would like to, but after he got through with Time, Life, the Reader's Digest, and half a dozen trade journals, he just didn't have any time for reading, though he often felt that he ought to renew his Shakespeare. There was no use saying that if the Shakespeare course he enjoyed had been really successful, he couldn't keep himself from reading Shakespeare. He wouldn't have understood me.

So I suppose half of our majors get by relatively unscathed. But if our major programs are what they should be, the B or A student is never the same again. He is educated; his study of literature has changed him in irrecoverable ways. If he has a very bad case, he may give up all other vocational prospects and plunge into the precarious world of literature. If he is like us, rather than risk separation from his beloved he will marry her and settle down to the rewarding and frustrating career of a teacher. But this he should only do, we know, for positive rather than for negative reasons. If he has what it takes to do so, he will reconcile his education with the requirements of the market place, and be both educated and successful in some normal career. He may acquire his vocational training concurrently with his liberal education; more and more of our premedical students are majoring in English or philosophy while taking their biology and chemistry on the side. Or he may get his vocational training later. Business and industry make quite a case about wanting liberally educated men to train for leadership; however they overstate their wishes in this matter, they actually do hire such people and put them through their training courses. The best graduate schools of business administration are eager for superior English majors, and their graduates are in demand. Law is another possibility; I remember one of our English majors, now a moderately successful lawyer, who wrote me that he made law school endurable by regularly reading Chaucer on the eve of important examinations.

The consequences of all this for the planning of the English major program seem to me to be inescapable. Except for the special field of preparing teachers, the English major program must be kept free of vocationalism. Its core must be the study of the English language and of the literature written in English, in England, America, and other parts of the English-speaking world. And these must be studied liberally—that is, for their own sake, and for what they contribute to the student's liberal education as defined early in this paper. Whatever vocationally oriented courses—in journalism, technical and busi-

ness writing, radio and television, or whatever-it may be considered expedient for the English department to offer, these must not be included in the English major program. Nor should we be led by the boasting of our colleagues in the natural sciences to consider the English major a pre-Ph.D. factory. I should be unhappy if more than fifteen or twenty percent of our majors went on to graduate work in English; only those should do so who have a strong desire to teach and a recognizable talent for it. The rest should scatter-into medical, law, and divinity school, into graduate schools of business administration, directly into business, industry, banking, journalism, public relations, government service, and all the other occupations that do not demand graduate professional train-

In this way, I feel, we can make our

greatest contribution and discharge our greatest responsibility. Society needs a leaven of educated persons who read above the level of the Reader's Digest or Peyton Place, who can bring critical acumen to a new play or a new production of an old one, who can demonstrate that a love of poetry and an understanding of what poets do are not incompatible with sanity and even a degree of respectability. These are the people who will support public libraries, civic theatres, symphony orchestras, and literate periodicals; they may even defend teachers, preachers, and writers against the ever-present threat of obscurantist suppression and ignorant censorship. In short, they will behave like responsible, educated people. If we can contribute in even a small way toward increasing their number in the world, we can feel that the English major is performing its most important function.

M.L.A. CONVENTION 1959

EDWARD STONE

It's the same old city yet,
Carrie Meeber,
Though we came Convair or jet,
Carrie Meeber.
Still we strolled to Fitz and Moy's,
Drank with Charlie and the boys,
Shopped at Marshall Field for toys,
Carrie Meeber.

Oh, we're graybeards and all that, Carrie Meeber, And we have our footnotes pat, Carrie Meeber, Read Racine and Billy the Kid, Rule on ablaut and The Cid, Explicate what Prufrock did, Carrie Meeber;

Still, young hearts were there, and dreams,
Sister Carrie,
(Thunderbirds, not sorrel teams,
Sister Carrie),
Winter drove along the mass,
But the mannikins had class,
And we saw you at the glass,
Sister Carrie.

Associate Professor of English and Chairman at Ohio University (Athens), Dr. Stone has edited a number of books (on Naturalism, Ezra Pound, Henry James), written a number of articles (on Swift, Stephen Crane, James), and has published poems in various journals.

Counciletter

A REPORT ON NCTE'S GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY-CONVENTION

WILLIAM S. WARD

It is not possible to give a comprehensive report on everything that happens when a subject matter organization of sixty thousand members and subscribers sets out to celebrate its golden anniversary at the place of its birth. It may not be surprising, therefore, if this report, even when limited to matters of interest to College Section members, is little more than a frenetic sampling.

Short Papers and Principal Addresses: Nowhere is this difficulty more discouraging, perhaps, than when a reporter tries to reflect the variety and contents of the addresses and short papers that comprise a large portion of such a convention. This is so not only because many of the speeches are not available to him either as a listener or as a reader, but also because many of them yield poorly to short summary and brief extract. Enough are available, however, to make the attempt attractive and to make the reporter hope that some sort of justice can be done both to individual speakers and to the convention itself by means of a few quotations and redactions:

Our reading should offer us a wider entrance into life, together with a sharper eye, a keener ear, and a heightened sensibility. (J. B. Priestley)

The real business of the humanities is not knowledge, but wisdom. (Emerson Shuck)

I take it that the virtue of studying literature is that thereby we study man by art; we study him as a whole, as intellect and emotion, as individual and society, as nature and experience, in every way that man is capable of conceiving himself. I take it that the danger

is that we study literature not as art at all, but as a phenomenon whose interesting trappings can be observed. Studied as art, world literature is notable for the extent to which it is representative and understandable; studied as the accumulation of a body of related data it offers few of the advantages of studying art. (Charlton Laird)

Any man who never puts pen to paper, whether to write poem, play, novel, or essay, a bitter denunciation or an impressionistic tribute, a biography or a history, an analysis or a query—that man is not truly and totally engaged. And ours above all other professions demands the total engagement of mind and heart. (James E. Miller, Jr.)

Far too many teachers serve Shakespeare's plays to their students much as parents feed their children spinach, not because it tastes good but because it is good for them. (Louis Marder)

Teaching by teachers and not learning by students seems to have become an established practice in American institutions of learning, a thing that is utterly wrong. It was becoming customary in Woodrow Wilson's time. He objected to it, and tried with some temporary and local success, to substitute learning for teaching. He regarded the education of every individual as strictly dependent on what that individual did for himself, and he thought of the teacher as an adviser of the student and as a companion of the student in the process of learning. (Hardin Craig)

The assumption that the nonproductive scholar is better in the classroom than the productive scholar is an old chestnut. That there are good teachers who are unproductive should of course be admitted, but it should also be admitted that many of them are both lazy and

Head of the Department at the University of Kentucky, Dr. Ward it current chairman of NCTE's College Section Committee and wrote the history of the Section published in the November (1960) issue of College English. irresponsible. . . . It is this new typethe man-who-loves-his-students-so-muchhe-can't-find-time-to-think-or-work-ona-professional-level-who is the current danger. (William Van O'Connor)

Many a teacher has taught the names and dates of authors, the titles and the subjects of their works, the life and times in which they flourished, the facts of their lives, the circumstances of their copying or their publication, solemnized with well-chosen clichés of criticism, and has gone to his reward, reassured by the belief that he has been teaching literature. (Charlton Laird)

Most often that scholarship is best which is felt and not seen, sensed and not heard. It would lie below the surface of every comment of the teacher . . . it would add a tone of assurance to the voice and an air of confidence to the stance. This teacher is the teacher who has digested his scholarship, brought it into some meaningful relationship to the poem or novel he is teaching. But beware of undigested scholarship which is seen and not felt, heard and not sensed. Its great heavy chunks and blocks will lie like booby traps around the classroom, tripping the students, deceiving the teacher, becoming in themselves such ponderous and demanding colossuses of interest as to cause the poem to fade from sight and the novel to disappear from memory. That fragile thing we try to instill in students-call it enthusiasm or what you will-is easily dampened by excess footnotes, readily water-logged by a parade of erudition, and frequently drowned by a flood of facts. (James E. Miller, Jr.)

If we may assume that reasonable mastery of a subject is requisite for teaching that subject in high school, we have cause for concern, for ten to fifteen per cent of those who complete college preparatory courses for teaching lack reasonable mastery of their subject. (Jay E. Greene)

The colleges must make certain that the graduates whom they send to teach in the high schools are competent, and this can come about only after the colleges have been in steady communication with the high schools about expectancies and standards. (Richard Lander)

My colleagues and I appreciate our college brothers' occasional letters-to-the-editor demanding better class loads and working conditions for us. On the whole, though, these are internal matters which we can handle if the external pressures make it obvious that our students can't get into college without the type of teaching that smaller class loads and more secretarial help make possible. (Richard Lander)

Leave the skills and drills to the schools, where elementary matters can be and are taught, and where elementary matters should be learned by prospective students. The colleges and universities can then drop their remedial programs, clear their freshmen courses of remedial elements, and make the student responsible for what he should learn in his school years. This procedure will give to the schools the kind of support they need, a clear and positive indication by the colleges and universities that the entering freshman who is not prepared for college work will perish. This is the first step in any program for improving the college course, a retraction of the virtual promise to the high school student that he will be given a fancy and expensive repetition of the junior high school course. The college course can then focus on its proper subject matter, the language as it functions in the structures used by educated people, and on its proper objectives, the intelligent understanding and the effective use of language in these structures. (Gordon Wilson)

Now where does the enjoyment of good writing and good literature begin? Surely in the appreciative response to good writing wherever that writing may be found. One place, to cite one out of many, is in the columns of a sports writer who is not content to rely on the cliches and claptrap of his trade, who has an eye for a character, a feeling for a dramatic moment, and regularly tries

to find some good words to tell his readers what his eye has seen, his mind has felt. What shall you do about a writer of this sort? Ignore him, so as not to waste a moment of the time allotted to Chaucer, Milton, or Charles Lamb? If so, you may be missing a chance to show young people that good writing does have an important connection with their uproarious lives. (J. B. Priestley)

Business (the Saturday morning College Section meeting): some five hundred members were present. . . . Robert Gorrell and Autrey Nell Wiley were introduced as newly elected members of the College Section Committee to succeed Charlton Laird and Donald Tuttle, whose three-year terms were expiring. They join Francis E. Bowman and William S. Ward (whose terms expire in 1961) and Louise Rosenblatt, R. C. Simonini, Jr., and Robert Tuttle (whose terms expire in 1962) as the other members of the Committee. . . Brice Harris, in behalf of the Section, presented the works of Wallace Stevens to Frederick

L. Gwynn and thanked him for his five years of distinguished and untiring service to the Section and to the Council as editor of College English. . . . Donald R. Tuttle presented the recommendation of the College Section Committee that in the future advisers to College English, instead of being elected by the membership at large from a slate prepared by the Nominating Committee, should be appointed by the College Section Committee from a list of names submitted by the editor of College English. The reasons for the change were explained and the recommendation was approved unanimously. . . . Frederick L. Gwynn and Albert R. Kitzhaber were elected to serve on the Section's Nominating Committee and John Gerber (appointed by NCTE's Executive Committee) was announced as the member of the 1960 Nominating Committee to continue on the 1961 committee and serve as its chairman. . The meeting was then turned over to William Van O'Connor and James E. Miller, Jr. (new editor of College English) speaking on the subject of "Putting Literary Scholarship to Work in the Classroom.

ARS PLATONICA

W. ARTHUR BOGGS

From Plato's time to Hyman's It's been drummed into our brains That critics are the sane ones— Only poets are insane!

Associate Professor of English at Portland State College and Portland Extension Center, Mr. Boggs has had poems published in many magazines and reviews.

Current English Forum

MARGARET M. BRYANT

What is the status of a word like evenings in a sentence such as I work evenings?

A.B.N.

Expressions like open evenings and work evenings are well established in the language, having survived from the Old English period. One of the functions of the genitive case was to indicate time relationships, as in deg, "day," deges, "by day." This survival of an old adverbial genitive may be observed in "Evenings he would write letters" or in the phrasal-genitive equivalent "Of an evening he would write letters." There is no objection to always and nowadays, which illustrate the same construction. The use of the word evenings is recorded in the Dictionary of American English, Vol. II, the citation being from the year 1862. Did any one who happened to be listening to the Army-McCarthy hearings on June 3, 1954, wince when Roy Cohn answered: "Yes sir, my job was so important that I was forced to work nights, weekends, and bolidays"? It is doubtful that any one of the millions of listeners gave it a second thought. In a study of adevertisements in New York newspapers it was found that the ratio of advertisements of stores which were open in the evening was three to one in favor of "Open Evenings" instead of "Open Every Evening," an alternative. The usage was employed more often in the papers that catered to readers who find it convenient to shop in the evening. The New York Times did not avoid the use of the expression, even though ninety-five per cent of its advertisers are firms that are closed in the evening. Both "Open Evenings" and "Open Nights" were found in the Times. Recently an English teacher, a Ph.D., wrote in a letter ". . . I am giving myself a kind of home extension course in these categories of knowledge evenings" (July 20, 1955).

A study of literature, exclusive of advertising, showed that both the adverbial genitive and the prepositional phrases are employed. The preference here is for "in the evening," "at night," "by day" to "evenings," "nights," "days." Among the

writers who employ the latter may be listed Brooks Atkinson, the drama critic of the Times, and William L. Worden, who in one sentence in the Saturday Evening Post (November 20, 1954, p. 39) used two adverbial genitives and one prepositional phrase: "None of them realize that Mrs. Catter working days and caring for two youngsters in the evenings, and Mrs. Conrad who works evenings as a waitress. . . ." From these illustrations and from the numerous advertisements we have today it will be safe to say that the adverbial genitive will remain. In studied or formal writing, however, the prepositional pharases are generally used.

Collective Nouns

Ever since the Middle English period, the number of the verb with a collective noun subject has varied between singular and plural. When the noun refers to the group as a whole, the singular verb is used, but when it refers to the individual members, the plural is employed. Also expressions like ten dollars, two-thirds, one hundred pounds, ham and eggs, cake and ice cream are often used with a singular verb. For example, "Ham and eggs are not sold here." Likewise, "Eight hours of sleep is enough for anyone" or "Man and wife is one flesh" or "Late hours was affecting his health."

Of the illustrations of collective nouns of various types available for this study, 66% were treated as singular. Most of the time the collective noun subject and its singular verb are in juxtaposition, as in "The commission is appointed" (New York Times Magazine, February 27, 1955, p. 64/5), but about one-fourth of the time plural words intervene: "A group of famous composers and conductors has been invited. ..." (New York Times, October 2, 1955, p. X9/5). In the examples with a plural verb or plural reference, the subject and verb (or pronoun) are in juxtaposition slightly over half the time; plural words intervene slightly under half the time. Illustrations of each are: "The committee extended their

invitation directly to the lecturer..." (New Yorker, October 25, 1952, "Profiles"); "A splendid group of writers are turning out novels..." (New York Times Book Review, November 20, 1955, p. 53/3).

Another study made in reference only to firms or companies found almost the exact opposite: 35% in the singular and 65% in the plural.²

The evidence shows that collective nouns may be followed either by a singular or plural verb or by a singular or plural pro-

"Studies were made by Klara Adams (Saturday Evening Post, May 1, 1952), Jo Hagopian (New York Times Magazine Section, March, 1, 8, 1955), Jane Matia (New Yorker, April 10, 1954), Jacqueline Meyer (1 issue of American Magazine and selected portions of the Saturday Evening Post, 1954), Georgia L. Morris (New Yorker, April 10, 1954), Eleanor Schwab (Vogue, April 15, 1954), Janet Smith (Charm, April, 1954), Rosaline Starks (Atlantic Monthly, April, 1954), Mary Anne Wanek (New Yorker, April 17, 1954), Grace Weil (New Yorker, April 17, 1954), Grace Weil (New Yorker, April 25, December 20, 1952), all at Western Reserve University; Mary A. Richardson (12 issues of the New York Times, November

'Study was made by Sidney J. Frigand at Brooklyn College (Good Housekeeping, Ladies' Home Journal, McCall's, Redbook, Today's Woman, Woman's Home Companion, May and June, 1952, and newspapers: Brooklyn Eagle, Baltimore Sun, Cleveland Plain Dealer, International News Service, New York Herald Tribune, New York Daily Mirror, New York Daily News, New York Times, Trenton Times-Advertiser).

12-16, 18-23, 25, 1957) at University of Chicago; I. Willis Russell (reading from September, 1957, to September, 1958), Charles Word

(reading 1957-1958), at University of Alabama.

noun of reference. Professor Russell Thomas reports an instance of the plural pronoun from the New York Times Magazine: "The document bound each party in the names of their respective national chairmen, . . . to conduct their campaigns . . . on a high plane. ." (July 1, 1956. p. 10).

Consider also the word couple which may be singular or plural: "The unhappy couple flee . . . where they take refuge" (Atlantic Monthly, April, 1954, p. 163); "The Holy couple is squabbling in . . . Flemish" (Ibid.); "The couple are traveling to New Orleans and Mexico" (Cleveland Plain Dealer, March 2, 1952, Society Section).

Professor Malcolm S. Coxe of Brooklyn College in listening to tapes of the World Series over the Columbia Broadcasting System (announcer: Al Helfer, beginning October 3, 1957) found the plural used 66 2/3% of the time and the singular 33 1/3%, as Milwaukee are; Milwaukee is; Braves are.

A few collective nouns are audience, committee, class, couple, crew, crowd, enemy, faculty, family, folk, government, group, herd, jury, lot, majority, minority, multitude, nation, number, party, people, public, team, and troop. British usage employs a plural verb with firm, government, and public: "The public were requested to keep off the grass," whereas American usage favors the singular.

Questions on usage should be sent to the Chairman of the NCTE Committee on Current English, Professor Margaret M. Bryant, I Montague Terrace, Brooklyn 2, N. Y.

NCTE announces that the director of the London Seminar on Contemporary Writing in Britain for the NCTE 1961 summer study tours will be John Gross, former Chief Editor of Gollancz, Publishers, former Harkness Fellow at Princeton, presently lecturer in English Literature at Queen Mary College, University of London, and regular contributor to the London Times Literary Supplement. Mr. Gross will be responsible for organizing the seminar and in inviting British writers to participate in the series of meetings.

Rebuttal

WE'RE DAMNED IF WE DO AND WE'RE DAMNED IF WE DON'T

W. ARTHUR BOGGS

In a recent article in College English ("The Care and Feeding of English Departments," January 1960) Professor Charles A. Fenton condemned the profession for being too traditional and not professional. A chemist or sociologist, he wrote, is prepared to practice his profession both in and out of college, but not the professor of English. He reads literature but does not write it. He writes articles which only his colleagues in his own narrow speciality read. But, one may counter, so do specialists in most academic and professional areas. And, in the light of a rather large number of articles in the more literary press which criticize our contemporary literature because so much of it is produced by college professors of English, to condemn college professors for not producing literature is a new twist. We're damned if we do and we're damned if we don't.

Outside of a very small number of superior literary magazines, the periodical burden of the dissemination of literaturethoughtful articles and quality poems and short stories-is being carried by the little magazine of limited circulation. In each issue of almost every one of them the work of at least one college professor of English will be found. Professors of English are writing literary articles of general interest, quality poetry, and well-constructed short stories. Indeed, the nonprofessorial aspirant to literary fame is justified in his complaint that his competition is being subsidized by the public and private institutions of higher learning. The professor of English does not have to write for a living. He may write because he wants to express himself creatively. Often he writes literature as a means of professorial advancement. Probably both reasons pertain. And he is still damned if he does it. and is now being damned if he doesn't.

The critics damn him because they say he has made our literature anemic. He really doesn't know anything about real life, having spent his years behind cloistered walls. Of course, these critics overlook the fact that the younger college professor came through the jungle of the depression only to spend from three to five years in the armed forces. To work his way through college he played in dance bands, dug ditches, and swept floors. Then he spent from three to five years starving and supporting a family as he engaged in the dog eat dog competition of a top graduate school to complete a tough program of specialization. But he still doesn't know

a damn thing about life.

The older, established professors damn their younger colleague who engages in creative activity because, "Well, you know, it really isn't scholarly; publish a few good scholarly articles in reputable professional magazines." So our aspiring artist writes poems, short stories, a play or a novel with his left hand while doing research on the phonemic characteristics of sixteenth century English and writing his articles with his right hand. Neither hand does well. The established professional damns the art as poor and the articles as "not significant." Unfortunately, our would-be-published artist and scholar has now compromised himself with both those who say "write literature" and those who reiterate "write scholarship." Lost in a morass of conflicts, he decides to devote all of his spare time to reading. He soon discovers that this course of inaction leads to professional limbo. Back to the grind he goes. Damned, double damned, or triple damned, he might as well write.

And just every once in a while he does produce a significant, slim little volume of verse, a few well-written short stories, a good play, or an artistically constructed novel. Sometimes his production even brings him a few extra dollars. His artistically inclined colleagues take heart. Writing literature may not be the province of the college professor of English. Scholarship may be overdone and dull. We'll be damned if we won't try both and be damned by both sides.

JACK BURDEN: CALL ME CARRAWAY

TED N. WEISSBUCH

In "Jack Burden: Modern Ishmael" (College English, October 1960), Dr. Charles Kaplan suggests that Melville's Ishmael has a prototype in Jack Burden, narrator of Robert Penn Warren's All The King's Men. While many similarities exist in both characters, Jack Burden is more like Nick Carraway, the narrator in Fitz-gerald's The Great Gatshy (1925). It is not my intention to attack the Ishmael-Burden thesis, but rather to suggest that Burden's literary ancestry may be located closer at hand than Professor Kaplan suggests. His quotation from W. H. Auden, that "Most American books might well start like Moby Dick . . . 'Call me Ishmael,' " is closer to the truth than the theory of the Ishmael-Burden relationship. Perhaps it is the universality of Moby Dick which helps to explain its greatness.

Several other authors and novels come to mind in terms of focus, technique, and plot. Robert C. Slack has related Jack Burden's story to the Telemachus theme, the dispossessed young man on a spiritual quest for the purpose of finding his "father," and re-establishing contact with his home, community, and world. Tyler Spotswood, narrator of John Dos Passos' Number One, which appeared in 1943, three years before the Warren novel, is the same type of observer-participant in the story of a Southern demagogue forcing his will on the public by means of bureaucratic control. This similarity is discussed in All The King's Men: A Symposium, by Members of the Department of English, Carnegie Institute of Technology, 1957. The Telemachus theme also appears in James Joyce, Thomas Wolfe, Eugene O'Neill, T. S. Eliot, and Willa Cather. Coincidently, the narrator's name in Miss Cather's My An-

tonia (1918), is Jim Burden; like Jack Burden and Nick Carraway, he is also

concerned with his involvement in history

and time. In the last pages of Miss Cather's novel, Jim Burden tells Antonia that no matter what they have missed, they have possessed together "the precious, the incommunicable past." After twenty years of separation, he experiences his "rebirth."

But Warren's Jack Burden and Carraway, in the last analysis, offer the greatest similarities. Burden accepts the responsibility of returning "into the convulsion of the world, out of history into history and the awful responsibility of Time." Carraway also emphasizes the time-history relationship in trying to understand the world. Just as Burden's character develops only after he accepts his heritage, his past, and a sense of responsibility, so Nick grows when he realizes that Gatsby's dream of the green light across the bay is the "orgiastic future that year by year recedes before us. . . . So we beat on, boats against the current, borne back ceaselessly into the past." Both informants retain their socially elevated positions and emerge from their narratives embittered but matured.

Each develops a sense of acceptance based on his willingness to face the world on its own terms. Carraway comes to realize that the East Egg-West Egg futility and falseness permeate not only the surface of Gatsby's life, but the entire culture. This cynical insight results in his statement that Gatsby is "worth the whole damn bunch put together." Burden's "moral neutrality of history" emerges when he realizes that "history is blind, but man is not," and that "in the end the truth gave the past back to me." While Professor Kaplan's thesis is correct in pointing to similarities between Ishmael and Burden, I submit that the latter's ancestry can be traced to a whole series of "reborn" characters who are closer to him in time, perception, and subject matter than is Ishmael.

News and Ideas

Editors: Ross Garner and Louis H. Leiter, University of Nebraska

THE MINNESOTA REVIEW'S first issue has appeared (October 1960) containing fiction, poetry, criticism of art and literature, and the usual reviews. Frederick J. Hoffman and Allen Tate write on "The Literary Twenties," a two part review to be completed in the second issue.

THE ONLY COPY OF SPECTRUM we have seen (Fall 1958) has just reached us. It contains an explication of Eliot's "Gerontion" by Hugh Kenner, an article on "Smollett and the Art of Caricature" by Milton Orowitz, a note by William Carlos Williams on the American poet, Charles Tomlinson, and poetry and short stories of more than minor interest. Spectrum is published at the University of California's Santa Barbara campus.

AT A TIME when so much is being written against the study of literary criticism, Norman Friedman's "What Good Is Literary Criticism" in *The Antioch Review* (Fall 1960) comes as a breath of fresh air: "It will be my purpose in this paper to show that consciously reasoning about literature in its several aspects does have important consequences and that these are not necessarily bad—indeed, that they may be positively useful and good."

THE SOUTH AFRICAN TRADITION (a brief survey of culture and art in the Union of South Africa) is available free from the Information Service of South Africa, 655 Madison Avenue, New York 21.

THE LITERARY REVIEW devoted an entire issue (Summer 1960) to the arts of the Philippines. In the Autumn 1960 issue, Edward Dahlberg attempts to scuttle Moby Dick in a fat essay: "I have changed my mind about Herman Melville, for I once loved this Cyclops whose father is Oceanus. . . The critical credo that obtains today is that if a book is obese and heavy enough, it is a masterpiece. Several hundred barrels of whale-oil are

not as heroic as one drop of Sarpedon's blood for which Zeus wept."

ALFRED KAZIN concludes his essay, "The Function of Criticism Today" (Commentary, November 1960), with these words: "This is why, properly speaking, there can never be a consciously ignorant, a mass psychology, in regard to modern literature. For the essence of the modern movement is that it represents a permanent revolution of consciousness, an unending adventure into freedom. In the deepest sense, we can never study modern literature or art; we can only be part of it. That is why criticism is important. We must practice criticism on the older writers lest they harden into the only acceptable writers. We must learn to practice criticism on the newer writers in order to bind them more truly to our own experience. We must practice criticism on our age while it is still here to show us its possibilities."

MILTON: "Theme and Structure in Paradise Regained" (SP, April 1960) and "The Ship-Tempest Imagery in Samson Agonistes" (N&Q, October 1959), by Barbara Kiefer Lewalski, suggest fascinating approaches to Milton.

NEW PUBLICATIONS: MSS (Mount Shasta Selections) will appear twice yearly. "The primary purposes of MSS are the publication of good short novels, long poems, and plays-forms sometimes difficult to place elsewhere—and the dissemination of the best new graphic art in the U.S. and abroad." Address: MSS, 670 East Fifth Avenue, Chico, California.

THE YALE SERIES of recorded poets announces that these albums are now available: Tate, Fitts, Kunitz, Lowell, Winters, Starbuck, Ransom, Bogan, Simpson, Blackmur, Anderson, Aiken, Eberhart, Warren, and Marianne Moore. Single Records \$5.95 plus 40c for handling. 202 Davenport Avenue, New Haven.

THE 1961 CONVENTION of American Association of Land-Grant Colleges and State Universities, will be held in Philadelphia, November 23-25. For information write Donald Tuttle, Department of English, Fenn College, Cleveland, Ohio.

THE FOURTH SUMMER SCHOOL of Linguistics will be conducted by the University of Alberta, July 3 to August 11, 1961. All inquiries should be directed to Dr. E. Reinhold, Director, Summer School of Linguistics, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada.

RUSSELL KIRK'S "May Professors Profess Principles?" in *The Southwest Review* (Autumn 1960), should be read by everyone interested in college teaching.

WESTERN HUMANITIES REVIEW: We liked "The Object of Scorn: An Aspect of the Comic Antagonist" by E. M. Blistein (Spring 1960), "Dr. Johnson and the Cheerful Robots" by Henry Pettit, "Dylan Thomas' 'Naked Vision'" by Edward A. Bloom, "Huckelberry Finn and the World's Illusions" by Donna Gerstenberger (Autumn 1960), and "The Value of Menken" by Peter Buitenhuis (Winter 1960).

"HOLIDAY," a short story by Katherine Anne Porter (Atlantic, December 1960), reminds us that her novel, Ship of Fools, might appear this year.

THE LONDON TIMES LITERARY SUPPLEMENT (September 9, 1960) is a special issue devoted to "The British Imagination: Trenchancy and Tradition."

NOW IN ITS SECOND and apparently very successful year, *The Critical Quarterly* (The University, Hull) publishes essays on "The Poetry of Wallace Stevens," "The Idea of a Literary Elite," "The Defeatism of 'The Waste Land,'" and "An Analysis: Yeats' Byzantium" (Autumn 1960).

STANLEY EDGAR HYMAN gives at least a partial reading of "Sweeney Among the Nightingales" in light of Eliot's criticism in *The American Scholar* (Winter 1960).

"THERE IS PERHAPS no surer method of documenting changes in literary taste than the discussion of the metamorphosis of such a distinctive theme as that which we have examined," writes H. M. Richmond in "Polyphemus in England: A Study in Comparative Literature" (CL Summer 1960). "Minute but crucial changes of style and intention, as well as major dislocations which are often less significant can be detected without arbitrary conjunctions and to this extent the analysis of such set patterns is useful to students of comparative literature, though most surveys of Renaissance reworkings of classicalities will show distortions and attenuations such as we have just seen."

LADY CHATTERLY AGAIN: U. C. Knoepilmacher writes in Victorian Studies (December 1960), "The Rival Ladies: Mrs. Ward's Lady Connie and Lawrence's Lady Chatterley's Lover." "Lawrence's handling of Lady Chatterley's Lover involves, among other things, a reaction to the ethos of Lady Connie. Lawrence may or may not have read Mrs. Ward's novel. But what seems his meticulous inversion of its plot and of the values represented by its main characters reveals not only his repudiation of an artificial outgrowth of Victorian ethical thought, but also indicates the extent of his own, quite possibly reluctant, indebtedness to the great Victorian masters."

I. ROBERT OPPENHEIMER'S 1959 lecture to the ACLS, "Tradition and Discovery," first printed in the ACLS Newsletter in October 1959, has been reprinted in Western Humanities Review for Spring, 1960. It deserves to be emblazoned across the heavens. It is the best examination of the central problem of our time-the relationship of moral value and special knowledge-we know of. Oppenheimer defines tradition as "what makes it possible for us to deal as sentient and thinking beings with our experience, to cope with our sorrows, to limit and ennoble our joys, to understand what happens to us, to talk to one another, to relate one thing to another, to find the themes which organize experience and give it meaning, to see the relevance of one thing to another." As a physicist, then, Oppenheimer outlines the

basic discoveries in physics during the past half century-relativity, the quantum, and atomic structure. He points out that these discoveries could not have been made apart from culture, tradition, history. In fact, he goes on to say, this new knowledge "is not something that you are likely to understand if you have spent all your previous life in a normal common-sense life. It involves the application of what was earlier acquired; it involves the tradition, words, experience, mathematics, logic; . . . common sense and specialized knowledge are in a very special, unsymmetrical relation to each other. All our knowledge, . . . starts with common life: words which we know and do not have to argue about, that are in our experience. Then we begin to manipulate, intellectually and physically; and new things grow." And thus, specialized knowledge becomes the province of the expert, and our twentiethcentury "cognitive house" is characterized by rapid growth, fragmentation, and the infinite character of the knowable; "For this is a time when the specialized traditions flourish and the common one, binding us all together, is eroded." Practical problems are apparently being solved without regard to "the extraordinary change in the intellectual background of life." We cannot, however, oppose change and development; it is central to human life. We can, perhaps, remove the impediments to communication which authoritarian dogmatists impose on us by official action and philistinism, which is "a terrible trouble." "We need, certainly in higher education, to be sure that some genuine experience of discovery and rediscovery is a part of the life of everyone who is educated." "We have, I think, in dealing with this world," Oppenheimer begins his final paragraph, "a double duty; a duty on the one hand to be constant and firm and faithful to

what we really know, to what is close to us, to our art, our knowledge, our own community, our tradition, in the sense in which tradition has been the story of man's glory, where we live fully as men. To all other traditions, to all the rest of the world with its wonders that we do not know very well, we need a sense of hospitality and openness, a willingness to make room for the strange, for the thing that does not fit. This is a hard double duty," he says, but continues, "If it is made possible at all, it is because it is moderated by things quite outside the cognitive order; by friendship, by the regard and love we bear one another, which soften the harshness of isolation, which bring us news and sympathy and understanding of what our fellows are doing, which bind a common human tie between us, and between the many, many branches of this growing tree of knowledge." Oppenheimer ends his essay with "a picture of a common life and an ordered world . . . touched and illuminated by community, and by knowledge of the world and of man."

TO CELEBRATE the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Houghton Mifflin Literary Fellowship, the editors of Houghton Mifflin Company, in collaboration with Esquire magazine, are offering a special award of \$7,500.00.

TWO \$10,000.00 FICTION PRIZES, The Prix Formentor and The International Publishers' Prize, were recently established at a conference of publishers and editors from six countries meeting in Formentor, Mallorca. The prizes will be awarded for the first time on May 1, 1961, and each year thereafter. For further information write to Fiction Prizes, Grove Press, Inc., 64 University Place, New York 3, N. Y.

Gifts and Bequests to

The Research Foundation of the National Council of Teachers of English are exempt from federal income taxes according to the United States Treasury Department

Books

Editors: Robert E. Knoll and Bernice Slope, University of Nebraska

THE PORTLAND EXPERIMENT

ROBERT C. POOLEY

Initiated by the Board of Directors of the Portland Public Schools, approved and fostered by nine Oregon colleges and universities, financed by the Portland Public Schools and the Fund for the Advancement of Education, the thirteen volumes of the Portland High School curriculum study present college preparatory courses of study and recommendations for procedures for all the general areas of the secondary school, exclusive of health and physical education.1 Discussed in this report are the introduction to the study and the three volumes concerned with Literature; English Language and Composition; Speech; and Speaking, Writing, and Reading in Courses other than English and Speech. The scope of this curriculum study, the energy expended on it, the cost, and the distinction of its leaders and contributors will give it high prestige. It is important, therefore, that it be closely examined, and evaluated both for what it is and what it is not.

The Introduction to the Study, Volume One, by Albert R. Kitzhaber (University of Kansas) and Alburey Castell (University of Oregon), establishes at once that this is a college-preparatory curriculum written by college teachers. It is designed for the "college-capable" students, who are defined as the top 50 percent of Portland high school students. What is to happen to the lower 50 percent of students is not the concern of this curriculum, though it is hoped they may "profit" from the "improved" content of these courses. The question to which the committee addressed

themselves is, "Are college-capable students being taught the right things to prepare them effectively for college study?" The specific curriculums, therefore, presumably indicate what are the "right things" to study in high school in preparation for college. The general recommendations contain matters of importance to all secondary education. The committee endorse ability grouping and the formation of homogeneous classes; they urge enrichment programs for able students, and greater flexibility in the school schedule, particularly to allow time for "meditation." They concur in advising original writing in all high school subjects. Of teacher load they say, "Perhaps the most pressing need for reduced load exists in English classes where [it is] impossible to demand enough original student composition and to correct it with requisite care." Equally significant recommendations go to colleges. Freshman and sophomore courses should be restudied to be sure the faults discovered at the secondary level are not also present at the college level. Advanced placement programs are "essentially a stop-gap measure." Clarification of the functions of high school and college may eliminate them, though they are currently useful. Teacher training must be revised to allow for more graduate work in subject matter for teachers now driven into education courses. Considerable emphasis is given to the need to raise the professional status of teachers; to give them assurance and dignity in their fields. Although teachers were consulted individually and in groups, it is amazing that no secondary school teacher is connected with the writing of this curriculum, nor is there evidence of direct utilization of high school teacher consensus, nor of research in secondary education. On the other hand, a philosophical consideration of liberal education as a function of the secondary school is eloquently presented by Professor Castell as a supplement to this volume.

^{&#}x27;The Portland High School Curriculum Study, in Thirteen Volumes, Albert R. Kitzhaber, Director (School District No. 1, Multnomah County, Oregon, 1959). Volumes 1, 2, 3, and 10.

Professor of English at the University of Wisconsin, Dr. Pooley is an authority on English usage.

The Curriculum in Literature Volume Two, by Donald MacRae (Reed College), is a survey of present methods and materials in the teaching of literature leading to the general conclusion "a little more order in the Portland curriculum would greatly increase its educational effectiveness." More specifically, balance and diversity in the curriculum result in ineffective distribution of emphasis; teaching loads are too heavy; teachers need more content; texts need great improvement; more reading in common is desirable; ability grouping is essential; increase of literary flavor is desirable. These considerations result in recommendations for the reorganization of the curriculum in literature: 1. Collegecapable students should deal with literary and intellectual themes and problems. 2. Four categories of reading are to be required: (a) a group of titles mandatory for reading and class explication; (b) required outside reading; (c) class reading at preference of teacher; (d) free reading for informal reports. 3. Some authors should reappear in successive years. 4. Shakespeare is to be read in each high school year. 5. Certain literary forms should be systematically developed. 6. Historical sequence should be developed from the grade school on. 7. Literary evolution and literary relationships should be taught in grades 11 and 12. 8. Moderate use ought to be made of technical knowledge about style and structure. 9. Inter-relationships of English language and literature are to be developed throughout high school. 10. Writing about literature should have value as writing and as close examination of literature. 11. New texts in literature for primary and secondary use are needed. In addition the committee recommend that a present ninth grade course combining social studies and English be replaced by an unadulterated English class. This volume concludes with a "canon" of literature in parallel columns suggesting the content of mandatory reading for high school and college. The great number of high school teachers who yearn for a strengthening of the literary content of English courses and the establishment of college preparatory classes will find support and specific aid in this volume. The champions of hard

work and intellectual discipline for secondary schools will be pleased. At this time of vastly increasing numbers of collegebound students its appearance is timely. Yet it must be clearly emphasized that this is a college-conceived curriculum to serve college ends. In attitudes, content, and methods it reflects the academic high school of 1910. Teachers of English fought for decades to release themselves from the college domination of literary content and method, especially the establishment of a canon. Perhaps the pendulum has swung back; perhaps teachers now are ready to be told what to teach. Perhaps they agree that students should read the "right" things before entering college, and that the col-

lege knows what is "right."

Volume Three, English Language and Composition, by Robert M. Gorrell (University of Nevada) and Speech by Bower Aly (University of Oregon), emphasizes the nature of language as a cultural study. Seven topics are recommended for developmental study: 1. The Nature of Language and the Development of Writing; 2. English Syntax; Grammar; 3. Lexicography and Semantics; 4. English Sounds and Intonation; 5. American Dialects; 6. The History of the English Language; 7. The Nature of Correctness in Speech and Writing. The first recommendation is that language should be recognized as a subject matter for the course and pursued for its value as a humanistic study. Other recommendations are: Disciplined practice in writing should be increased-one writing assignment each week, arranged in a pattern of increasing complexity. Specifics in rhetoric, usage, and mechanics should develop from writing and speaking, but must also have assigned places in the curriculum. Courses of study at all levels should be organized in detail to insure coverage of essential topics. College courses should be revised to make them extend beyond high school. Both high school and college courses can profit from regular, cooperative reconsiderations of curriculums by teachers of both levels. Sound and valuable suggestions regarding the nature of language and composition teaching are offered in this volume. It is, however, disappointing in the degree to which it is hortatory rather

than explanatory. The majority of able high school English teachers will agree heartily with these principles but by what steps and procedures are they to be accomplished?

Speech is presented as cultural experience and a useful art. In the first category it is noted that the present curriculum of Oregon schools affords no opportunity to study great speeches as literature in English classes. In the second, the lack of specific developmental curriculum in speech in English classes and speech in optional elective classes is noted. The first recommendation follows naturally: syllabi for speech courses should be prepared immediately. Others are: improvement of supervision, to make responsibility for speech the duty of one person; the creation of a one-year program in speech for college-capable students. An appendix offers in some detail what this

course might contain.

Speaking, Writing, and Reading in Courses Other Than English and Speech Volume Ten, by Francis P. Gibson and Frank L. Roberts (Speech, Portland State College), Walter C. Foreman (English, Oregon State College), and Mark D. Marksheffel (Education, Oregon State College), recommends for Speaking that teachers in general need more training to improve their own speech and to render them competent to direct the speaking of students. These aims may be accomplished by stepping up the requirements in speech in programs of teacher preparation; by in-service courses and institutes for employed teachers, and by the use of "communication consultants" in the Portland schools to work with committees and staffs and "to continuously observe speech practices and programs." Writing was observed in classes other than English to reveal that many teachers feel inadequate to the task of evaluating written work and that the pressure of time in presenting their own subjects left little opportunity to teach and evaluate writing skills. Nevertheless, most teachers agreed that competence in writing is essential to success in their fields. The solution offered is, again, better teacher preparation. The study of Reading deals with reading problems above the level of the basic reading skills and emphasizes the use of reading

as a learning process in subject areas. Making adequate assignments, developing vocabulary, and establishing the purposes of reading are cited. Recommendations include the desirability of a developmental reading program for all students, a remedial program for retarded students, a caution against too much reliance upon machines in reading advancement, and a strong plea for better preparation of teachers to handle reading.

All the volumes here reviewed agree on two essential needs: better trained teachers, and better textbooks. As these are unquestionably college problems and responsibilities, it is to be hoped that the colleges will take heed. This curriculum brings into sharp focus an important principle in the articulation between secondary and collegiate levels of instruction. If it is the right and duty of the college to tell the high school teacher what are the "right things' to teach, then the high school teacher is degraded to a position of professional inferiority. But if the college should limit itself to describing specifically the competencies to be expected of a college-bound student, with illustrations as to how the college itself achieves these competencies, it raises the secondary school teacher to the level of partnership in a worthy educational enterprise. For the health and success of our educational system there can be no doubt which is the better course. Those who find the curriculum disappointing because of its hortatory tone, its lack of specific break-down of tasks, its strictly collegiate orientation, the absence of secondary-school teacher participation, may find answer, if not comfort, in the fact that the Portland School Board asked college teachers to tell them what collegebound students should study to be ready to enter college. This curriculum is their answer. It is a college preparatory curriculum. It is not the curriculum in English to meet the needs of the comprehensive American high school.

A TEACHER SPEAKS, Philip Marson (McKay, 1960, 230 pp., \$3.95). This is an appeal for a return to strict standards in secondary education and in college entrance requirements. After 41 years of teaching English, mostly at Boston Latin School,

Mr. Marson sets 1940 as the date when things began to go to pot. Locally, he sees the collapse as a matter of Boston politics, low teachers' salaries, and Harvard's departure from an admissions policy based strictly on adacemic criteria. Nationally, be blames the College Board and its sell-out to the computing machine, particularly its dropping of the old essay examinations. His own tone of self-righteous indignation and martyrdom is fatiguing, while his own writing style is curiously humorless, repetitive, and cliché-ridden. (Has he been teaching English too long?) Still, the appeal of his argument is clear to anybody who is anxious about intellectual standards, and Mr. Marson's preference for the British examination system and his contempt for our own will find agreement among many worried college teachers. In partial defense of the College Board, it ought to be added, first, that at least a gesture toward a return to written work is now being made, and second, that the Board's brand-new Commission on English is at this moment vigorously embarked on a program to fight some of these evils, emphasizing the content and the discipline of secondaryschool English. These efforts won't satisfy Mr. Marson, but they're something. WALKER GIBSON

NEW YORK UNIVERSITY

DIALOGUES ON THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH, Bertrand Evans and James J. Lynch (Bookman Associates, 1960, 306 pp., \$5.00). Professors Evans and Lynch (both California at Berkeley) have chosen to wage war on Professional Educationism by the device of a mock-dialogue featuring Libentia, a young teacher of literature, torn between the opposing arguments of Pulvius, the traditional literary scholar, and Vulpius, the hated educationist. A fellow named Elanchius, at ease in his olive grove, straightens everybody out more or less à la Socrates. The war is no doubt a holy one, but the choice of weapons was unfortunate. Repetitive and slow-moving, punctuated by a wearisome whimsy, the dialogues and their argument-that good books are useful as humanizing experiences -could certainly have been put in one

quarter the space. Poor Vulpius is viciously satirized: "The evaluative instruments formulated by we in the profession as to pupil responses to reading materials confront the real realities realistically, Libentia." A tax-paying shoemaker, one J. Quintus, surely takes a prize as the least convincing common man in literature. The authors, of course, are on the side of the angels, but it seems highly unlikely that the pious hope they express in their preface, that the book "will invite the attention of all who have a stake in the matter," can possibly be realized.

WALKER GIBSON

NEW YORK UNIVERSITY

A DISSENTING NOTE

THE BASIC FORMULAS OF FICTION, Foster-Harris, rev. ed. (University of Oklahoma Press, 1960, 146 pp., \$3.95). Since the first edition of this book for beginners in the art of writing "salable" fiction went through four printings before going out of print, it need not be treated as if it were an unknown quantity. Walter Campbell's textbooks on the writing of popular fiction have made the writing courses at the University of Oklahoma seem respectable even if unflattering to the concept of what a fully developed human being can be. Far less can be said for this book. Writer's Digest has called the writing laboratory in which Foster-Harris teaches "the best college residence school for teaching writing in the United States," but not only does he give his readers an interpretation of "plotting" in fiction so over-simplified as to be almost meaningless, but also so sweepingly dismisses any literary pretensions at variance with cheap taste and does it with such downright sneers that no truce with him is possible. "Quality" stories, he says, are all "tales of gloom and futility"; the taste of people who like them "is so naive that it is shared by almost every college sophomore." It can perhaps be demonstrated that Foster-Harris's advice has helped students to sell their wares. We all like to make money and do not necessarily feel debased from doing so. But the University of Oklahoma Press is a university press. Is it incapable of blushing? Are the Oklahoma students becoming so rich from selling their stories to justify philosophic defenses of their unquality?

BAXTER HATHAWAY

CORNELL UNIVERSITY

A LAMENT FOR BARNEY STONE, Robert Glynn Kelly (Holt, 1961, 255 pp., \$3.95). Though Kelly (Indiana) claims his academic novel has no reference to actual colleges or universities living or dead, the reader wonders. A comic novel.

AMONG THE DANGS, George P. Elliott (Holt, 1961, 255 pp., \$3.95). Seven of these ten stories by Elliott (Iowa) have been reprinted in annual collections of best short stories. Inmates of academia will find nuances lost on the layman, but all should enjoy these stories.

A CONCISE BIBLIOGRAPHY FOR STUDENTS OF ENGLISH, 4th ed., Arthur G. Kennedy and Donald B. Sands (Stanford University Press, 1960, 467 pp., \$5.00). Sands's (Boston College) revision contains three times the number of entries in four times as many categories as the third edition, in an effort to include new material and some mention of "psychology, sociology, religion, statistics, and other peripheral disciplines" useful to students of English literature. It presents long, usually good, lists of titles in specific fields such as "Place Names" and "Old English Readers," and for those the bibliography may be recommended. However, it has no guides to the titles listed-Allibone's Dictionary of English Literature (poor) gets equal billing with Harvey's Oxford Companion (excellent). The organization is so complex it separates works of a like nature-Raysor's review of research on the major Romantic poets from Houtchen's similar work on the lesser poets and essayists. It tries to include far too muchwhole sections on such subjects as library science, costume, and printing; and no less than thirty titles on how to write and where to sell articles. As a student manual it could use far more selection and guidance. As a reference work its chief fault is a totally inadequate index. One can locate individual

entries only if the author or editor is known beforehand-try, for instance, to find the C.B.E.L. Even subject matter scattered throughout the voluminous categories is extremely difficult to locate. One may also argue with the selection of titles. Why include Clive's monograph on the Edinburgh Review and omit the Shines's fine work on the identification of contributors to the Quarterly Review? Why the Bucknell Review, but not the Centennial Review? Where is Merle Johnson's American First Editions or John Nichols's Literary Anecdotes? Of course anyone may argue with another's selection, but in this work there seems to be no selection criteria at all. Despite all these strictures there is a wealth of information potentially available in this bibliography. Had some of the time devoted to this fourth edition been applied to the development of a detailed analytical index, the work would be far more than a series of lists.

BERNARD KREISSMAN

UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA

STUDIES IN AMERICAN LITERA-TURE, eds. Waldo McNeir and Leo B. Levy (Louisiana State University Press, 1960, 177 pp., \$3.00). This is a miscellany of eleven essays by present and former faculty members of Louisiana State University. All specialized studies of the kind found in professional journals, they are competent, sound pieces of scholarship. Several are especially noteworthy. In "The Puritan Poet as Preacher," Donald E. Stanford examines the unpublished sermons of Edward Taylor and concludes that Taylor was a thoroughly orthodox Calvinist. Adding a chapter to his work-inprogress on "the symbolic significance of the idea of 'The Republic of Letters,'" Lewis P. Simpson sees in Poe's attempts to found The Stylus Poe's "vision of literary order." As a solution to the problem of unity in Benito Cereno, Nicholas Canaday advances "the theme of authority as this tale's organizing principle." In "Tragic Consciousness in Isabel Archer," John Dove makes a convincing case for regarding Isabel as "a thorough-going romantic with the true romantic's longing for self-surrender and self-education." In a

searching analysis, James Roberts sheds considerable light of his own on Faulkner's Light in August. Others deal with early nineteenth-century nationalism and aesthetics (Shrell), "Emerson's Political Quandary" (Wheeler), Whittier's use of the sage (Oster), grail motifs in "Prufrock" (Rumble), dramatic elements in Cummings' poetry (Benstock), and McCullers' The Heart is a Lonely Hunter (Taylor).

WALLACE L. ANDERSON

IOWA STATE TEACHERS COLLEGE

THOREAU: MAN OF CONCORD, ed. Walter Harding (Holt, 1960, 251 pp., paper, \$2.00). Though not widely recognized as a great writer during his lifetime, Thoreau often inspired violent reactions among his contemporaries-violent reactions that found expression in journals, diaries, letters, autobiographies, memoirs, and newspapers. From this large body of material Mr. Harding (State University College of Education, Geneseo, New York) selects representative pieces, abridging many to eliminate irrelevant or repetitious material, and arranging the selections in chronological order according to date of publication. Teachers of American literature will find this book a useful supplement to Mr. Harding's well known Thoreau: A Century of Criticism (1954). But the present book is designed primarily for the student facing the task of writing a term paper. He is here given, as the editor observes in his prefatory remarks, a unique opportunity to encounter in exaggerated form the perennial question in every controversy: where does the truth lie? Five appendixes are included as special aids to the student: a chronology of Thoreau's life, three brief selections from his writings, a brief biographical sketch of each eyewitness cited in the text, a brief bibliography, and a list of suggested topics for papers.

C. E. Pulos

UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA

MARK TWAIN'S BURLESQUE PAT-TERNS AS SEEN IN THE NOVELS AND NARRATIVES 1855-1885, Franklin R. Rogers (Southern Methodist University Press, 1960, 189 pp., \$4.50). Less concerned with Twain's burlesques than with structural techniques in major works which Twain derived from his burlesque apprenticeship, Rogers (Wisconsin-Milwaukee) examines the travel narratives and the novels through Huckleberry Finn in the light of several devices that Twain experimented with. Utilizing unpublished material in the Mark Twain Papers, Mr. Rogers shows how Clemens adapted the techniques of alternating humorous and serious material, using an alternating serious and comic narrator, and transforming burlesque novel plots into serious ones, achieving the highest level of craftsmanship in Roughing It for the narratives and Huckleberry Finn for the novels. Though it is possible to quibble with his description of the origin of these techniques, Rogers' book provides the most satisfactory analysis of the structural principles in Clemens' major works to 1885; it is disappointing only because it fails to include The Connecticut Yankee, Joan of Arc, Pudd'nhead Wilson, The Mysterious Stranger, and other later works which show the final, vestigial utilization of some of these patterns.

HAMLIN HILL

UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO

A BIBLIOGRAPHY OF JAMES T. FAR-RELL'S WRITINGS, 1921-1957, Edgar Branch (University of Pennsylvania Press, 1959, 142 pp., \$6.00). Branch (Miami University) has produced a chronological list of Farrell's published works, with one or two trifling exceptions, and "one major exception"-"the hundreds of unsigned editorials" written for a nationally syndicated press bureau. One cannot quarrel with the limitations Branch imposed-a minimum of bibliographical description and publication history; but a selective index would have increased greatly its utility. Farrell appends a preface in his warm, but oversentimentalized style familiar to readers of his later works.

BERNARD KREISSMAN

UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA

CORA CRANE: A BIOGRAPHY OF MRS. STEPHEN CRANE, Lillian Gilkes (Indiana, 1960, 416 pp., \$6.75). Inspired by her childhood remembrance of Jacksonville, Florida, days, when Cora Taylor "commanded the stage from an unenviable

spotlight," Lillian Gilkes began several years ago to investigate Cora's diaries and notebooks, to collect letters and family records, and to examine a mass of published and unpublished data concerning Cora and her common-law husband, Stephen Crane. From her indefatigable research have come first the Stephen Crane Letters (with R. W. Stallman, U. of Conn.) and now Cora Crane, a carefully documented but dramatic presentation of the woman whom Crane met in her fashionable Jacksonville bordello, The Hotel de Dream, and with whom he lived the last years of his short life. The author does not anywhere lose sight of her unpredictable heroine; yet while she manages to render Cora complete and whole, with all her Bohemian eccentricities, her penchant for the clever aphorism ("Virtue never yet atoned for wrinkles . . . "), her passionate search for independence and identity, her devotion to Stephen, her improvidence, Miss Gilkes at the same time rounds out the Crane character, fills many gaps in the Crane legend, and reveals with true scholarly intimacy Crane's life from the time he left Florida for Greece and, later, England, until the moment of his death in Badenweiler, Germany.

HOYT C. FRANCHERE

PORTLAND STATE COLLEGE

THE HIPPOLYTUS OF EURIPIDES. tr. Donald Sutherland, and THE HIP-POLYTUS OF DRAMA AND MYTH, Hazel E. Barnes (University of Nebraska Press, 1960, 123 pp., paper, \$1.00). Professors Sutherland and Barnes (Colorado) have complemented each other effectively in this combined publication of a lively translation of a Euripides favorite with a generally well-reasoned commentary which brings interesting antiquarian research to supplement interpretation. The translation conveys with proper dignity the high emotional tension of the triangle of characters as they move toward their tragic end. Having been done originally for production with music, this translation carries fuller stage directions than usual, indicating not only movement and handling of properties, but also musical tone and pitch, e.g., "The NURSE is a soprano . . . singing d' in the same register as d. . . ." This liberty is more interesting than distracting. Miss Barnes sees the dramatic situation clearly (and rightly, I think) as one growing from the "interlocking of three complex personalities." If she tends to give too much emphasis to psychoanalytical interpretation—the heart of Hippolytus' trouble is "a narcissism stemming from deep-set emotional maladjustment"—we can disregard it in favor of a well-reasoned analysis of character and dramatic motivation. Such an interpretation offers both a contrast and a supplement to Kitto's different and equally convincing one.

MARY GAITHER

INDIANA UNIVERSITY

THE LITERATURE OF THE MIDDLE AGES, W. T. H. Jackson (Columbia, 1960, 432 pp. \$6.00). The title of the book suggests its scope. Professor Jackson (Columbia) has summarized the plots of works hitherto unsummarized; he has also condensed much medieval scholarship and added some of his own. A modern poet has said that historians should leave blanks in their writings for things they do not know. Medieval literary historians have been rather free in filling in the blanks. Mr. Jackson is partly aware of the defects of this method; partly he is not. Too often he reinforces judgments which have little basis in history or literature. How much more ascetic for example is Christianity than the late pagan cults: Stoicism, Neo-Pythagoreanism, Neo-Platonism? Jackson assumes that medieval writers did not handle mythology as gracefully as the Renaissance writers because they possessed no easily accessible organized book of mythology; presumably none knew Fulgentius, MV3, Ridewall, Boccaccio, Salutati, the Metamorphoses and the commentaries on Ovid. The Renaissance books of myth contain little more than these. The literary traditions of the Old English up to the writing of Beowulf, are labelled non-Christian; Mr. Jackson's own chronology lists the Caedmonian poems and certain Old English hymns as earlier. Courts of love are imagined; there is no historical evidence for them; John Benton's recent researches concerning the courts of Champagne in the twelfth century suggest that

those courts at least were considerably less interesting than the versions of them created by modern scholars. Andreas Capellanus comes out as a social chronicler clearly using stock arguments heard in the love rituals played at court; we do not know what Andreas heard at court; we are not even sure of his court. The book's theories about such courts and cults leads to an interpretation of Bernart of Ventadorn which is not based on either the Provencal text or the English translation (pp. 247-48). Literature misunderstood is made history so that the history so constructed can become the foundation of literary interpretation. The book is an honest effort. Much of it is valuable. But too often it consecrates cliches, and refuses the slow labor of the historian or the meticulous labor of the literary critic.

PAUL A. OLSON

UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA

HUMANISM AND POETRY IN THE EARLY TUDOR PERIOD, AN ESSAY, H. A. Mason (Barnes, 1959, 295 pp., \$6.50). If Mason (Exeter, England) and the other Leavis-ites could be less belligerent, their books would be more persuasive. As it is, this book's important contribution to renaissance studies is obscured by its author's determination to set all other scholars right. Professor Mason sets out to show that "humanism" is of the spirit not of the letter, and that Ciceronians and Grecians were not ipso facta humanists. "The Humanists are tiresome when they praise themselves and their bonae literae; they begin to matter when they turn themselves to the question: what can our studies do for the welfare of the civilization as a whole?" (p. 49) and later on, "the greatest weakness of the Humanists was their inability to conceive of a worthy function for literature" (p. 66). In considering Erasmus and More in the first section of the book, Mason attempts to correct R. W. Chambers. In the second section he discusses Wyatt's relation to the main tradition of Énglish verse, and attempts to set Kenneth Muir and C. S. Lewis straight. Like J. W. Lever, he praises the translations more than most critics and finds Wyatt an essentially solitary figure. These sane chapters on Wyatt are some of the most valuable in the book. The final chapter discusses Ben Johnson's relation to the classics. Here Mason's eminently sensible thesis is defended sensibly. This whole book is sure to be fought over for at least the next decade.

R.E.K.

SHORT TIME'S ENDLESS MONU-MENT. THE SYMBOLISM OF THE NUMBERS IN EDMUND SPENSER'S "EPITHALAMION," A. Kent Hieatt (Columbia University Press, 1960, 111 pp., \$3.75). Three hundred sixty-five years after the publication of Spenser's poem we are asked to consider the possibility that the 365 long lines in the poem represent the year (the short lines are not so easily fitted into a symbolic pattern); that the 23 stanzas plus envoy symbolize the 24 hours of a day, and that the division in the poem between the positive and negative refrains and by the coming of night in the seventeenth stanza symbolizes the situation of the hours at the summer solstice, which in the latitude of Spenser's marriage meant that the sun would be above the horizon for sixteen and a fraction hours and below for only seven and a fraction hours. Moreover, the claim is made that the 23 stanzas plus envoy are divided into two groups, 1-12 and 13-24-stanza 13 matching stanza 1, 14 stanza 2 and so on (pp. 86-109 print stanzas 1-12 opposite stanzas 13-24 to show the pairing) by which means Spenser has given us a counterpart of the sidereal hours at the equinoxes of both spring and autumn!

The whole thesis smacks of multiplying fractions, but Hieatt (Columbia) is so painstakingly careful not to impinge too much on our credulity; to link his study with medieval symbolism of number (possibly the best part of his book), and so energetically ingenious that the final result can only be wonder. Whatever credence may be given to it, and each reader must decide this for himself, there can be no doubt that Professor Hieatt has brilliantly added new dimensions to a close study of the poem's structure and text and to its relation to the corpus of Spenser's work.

JOHN P. CUTTS

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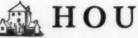
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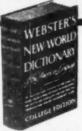
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